'We will never give up on the Japan market' PAGE 2
Blanco: DPS oversight is needed. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

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75¢

IN REVEALING EXTENT OF BIRTH TOURISM NETWORK

FBI's informant a physician

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

The Hua Mi Apartment in Garapan, which is also called Hanamitsu Hotel and Spa, where Sen Sun's alleged clients and caretakers used to occupy the entire complex.

» Witnesses identify clinic, buildings where defendant took, brought pregnant women

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

It was a physician who tipped off the Federal Bureau of Investigation to Sen Sun's alleged operation of a large birth tourism network on Saipan, according to federal court documents.

FBI special agent Scott Berkland disclosed in an affidavit that a physician stated in an interview on Sept. 21, 2017, that Sun brought many of his clients to the Marianas Medical Clinic for prenatal checkups and normal childbirths.

Berkland issued the affidavit in support of the criminal complaint, seizure, and arrest warrants against Sun. The affidavit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the NMI last Nov. 2.

Sun, an alleged overstaying Chi-

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Kilili confident of CW extension

By ERWIN ENCINARES
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REPORTER

» Considers a 'new visa category'

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) remains confident that an extension would be secured for the CW-1 program, which is set to end in 2019.

The tricky part is how to "write this legislation where even if we don't get a high number of CW-1s, we would continue to

See KILILI on Page 4

HOUSE GAMING SESSION

ERWIN ENCINARES

The House of Representatives Gaming Committee chair Rep. Joseph Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan) consults the legislative assistant with one of the bills the committee was discussing during yesterday's gaming committee meeting at the House speaker's conference room on Capital Hill.

Another poker operator sues

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

» 'Poker arcade generates $4.8K per day or $435K in 3 months'

Another poker parlor operator is suing the CNMI government and the Commonwealth Zoning Board so it wouldn't be required to move two of its four arcades out of villages.

Pacific Amusement Inc. is suing the government, the Zoning board, and Zoning board chair Diego C. Blanco for violations of due process and the equal protection clauses of the CNMI Constitution.

According to PAI secretary and treasurer James B. Gebhard, High Roller 3 in Koblerville, which is one of their two affected poker arcades, is expected to generate approximately $4,800 in earnings per day or $435,000 during the remaining three months of its business license.

In his declaration before the Superior Court, Gebhard said that High Roller 1 on Middle Road Garapan is also in an area not authorized for adult gambling machine businesses

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XTRA Airways says goal is to stay in business

By BEA CABRERA
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REPORTER

Days after XTRA Airways cancelled its China-Saipan flight due to contractual issues between it and Dream Pacific Aviation Services HK Ltd., the Florida-based carrier said its goal is to stay and continue doing business.

"We are here to do the right thing and continue business. The company recognizes the time and money invested to begin and continue operations," said Thomas Nolte, XTRA

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LOCAL
The inaugural Marianas Beer & BBQ Festival on Nov. 4, 2017, shows promise.

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Leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations mark the bloc's 50th anniversary.

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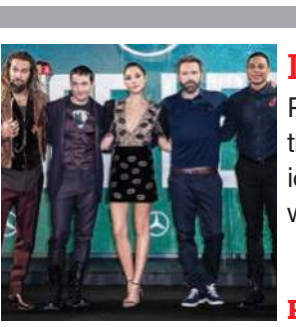

LIFE & STYLE
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Local

‘We will never give up on the Japan market’

By BEA CABRERA
bea_cabrera@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Japanese passengers board Delta Air Lines’ Narita-Saipan route last Nov. 13, 2017. A stewardess said the passengers were a mix of Japanese and U.S. citizens, where the former was the majority. It is the CNMI government’s hope to revitalize the Japanese market in 2018.

BEA CABRERA

The Japan tourism market represents over $300 million in economic impact to the CNMI, and making sure that the country will remain a major source market for the CNMI is a priority for the Marianas.

“I cannot imagine losing that much money in our economy,” said Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Chris Concepcion. “Needless to say, we will never give up on the Japan market. It is our oldest and closest source market to the CNMI.”

That commitment to Japan was further reinforced when Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Concepcion personally went to Tokyo last week to meet with Delta Air Lines executives to seal the reciprocity of commitment on both sides—continuous flights of Delta in their Narita-Saipan route and for the CNMI government to provide additional resources and support to Delta.

This commitment to Delta Air, among other marketing efforts in Japan by MVA, aims to stir the sluggish Japanese market to consider the CNMI once more as a preferred destination.

“The commitment of Delta to the CNMI means the Japan market will remain a major source market for the CNMI. It means the tourism industry can breath a sigh of relief that Delta’s plans to eliminate Guam from their network does not affect the CNMI,” said Concepcion.

At the MVA meeting last Nov. 9 at the Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan Word Resort, Access Inc., the MVA’s marketing arm in Japan, said that “branding enhancement” of the CNMI will be its priority in Japan.

“Japan used to be the No. 1 tourists in the CNMI. The market condition changed… [and] rebranding the Marianas for 2018 is in the pipeline,” said Access Inc. president Takashi Ichikura.

This includes hiring professional photographer Junji Takasago to take photos of the tourist sights on the three islands, media exposure through billboards put up in strategic locations such as the Shimbashi station in Tokyo, Japan Railway and subways, newspaper advertisements, online media platform, and new guidebooks.

He blamed the decline in the Japanese market on many factors such as flight suspensions that led to accessibility issues, the emergence of new niche destinations in Southeast Asia, superior marketing competitions against Taiwan and Hong Kong, price discount war among travel agencies, the North Korea missile threat, and airline yield management.

Despite these challenges, Concepcion said that MVA is exploiting all available marketing tools.

“When Delta announced their suspension of Guam flights effective January 2018 while keeping Saipan and Palau flights intact, it sent a signal to the market that Saipan was obviously performing better for them financially. The potential for growth and future expansion are there should market conditions improve,” Concepcion said.

“Our marketing strategies for Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya are different. Tokyo is the capital, the center of government, a financial powerhouse and the most populated metropolitan area in the world. Osaka is more laid back, famous for their food, and is the second largest city in Japan. And Nagoya is the third largest city, the headquarters of Toyota, famous for their food as well. So each city offers different opportunities for the MVA to tap into,” Concepcion added.

Airlift and rebranding the CNMI for the Japanese market are on the table and MVA seeks the community for support.

“It’s highly critical that we continue our rebranding efforts, revitalize the image of the Marianas in Japan, and build that into a positive cycle that results in more Japanese eager to visit Rota, Tinian, and Saipan,” Concepcion said,

“We seek community support with all our efforts to clean up our islands, improve our hotel properties, improve our infrastructure, promote local entrepreneurism so locals benefit from the tourism industry, be kind to our visitors, and clean up after yourselves. I think many of us forget what it’s like to be a tourist in a foreign country,” Concepcion added.

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XTRA Airways’ flight suspension could be ‘a threat’

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands believes the indefinite suspension of XTRA Airways flights to the CNMI could be a threat.

HANMI and Marianas Visitors Authority board chair Gloria Cavanagh said yesterday the unexpected suspension of the flight service has negative repercussions.

“Regardless of what anyone thinks, the airlines are still representative of our tourism economy as a destination and to have that cancellation, without any warning, is going to be damaging,” she said in an interview after a speech at the Rotary Club of Saipan meeting at Hyatt Regency Saipan.

Saipan Tribune archives attributed the service suspension to contractual issues.

Cavanagh said it was unfortunate that after all the work XTRA Airways put into getting their services started, it was suspended several months later.

“In the beginning, in June and July, they were actually fighting to get the approval to fly. …They went through all that work,” she said.

The impact of the flight suspension on the CNMI’s tourism industry has yet not be felt because it is currently slow season.

“Sometimes, the load factor goes down 30 percent and so were not going to feel the immediate effect of XTRA Airways pulling out. During high season, of course, we will because the demand is there,” Cavanagh said.

XTRA Airways usually services the Nanjing-Saipan route.

Overall, Cavanagh said, the suspension of XTRA Airways flights is a black eye for the Commonwealth as a destination, particularly since the CNMI is in the middle of the approval process for new airlines.

“We can give our recommendation but it’s more or less with [the Commonwealth Ports Authority],” she said.

MVA has the ability to send its recommendations to CPA but, at the end of the day, CPA can do whatever it feels is the right step for the Commonwealth, Cavanagh said, although MVA will continue to make recommendations on airlines that are reputable and will have a good working connection with the Commonwealth. “Other than that, it is unfortunately out of our hands,” she said. “We do go out and try to find other reputable airlines but we go after the ones we know and ones that are trustworthy.”

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy 40th birthday, Daddy Charlie! With love, from Donna and Moymoy.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Blanco: DPS oversight is needed

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

One of two recipients of a senator's letter that called for an oversight hearing on the Department of Public Safety believes that it "is needed" not only for the police but for "other agencies as well."

Rep. Ivan A. Blanco (R-Saipan) agreed yesterday with Sen. Paul Mangloña (Ind-Rota) that an oversight hearing on DPS has become necessary.

"It seems to me that the only oversight we do is during the budgetary sessions. I think that open communications between the departments and the Legislature is very important because then we are able to assess what their needs are, what [the departments'] shortfalls are, and what tools we could provide them," said Blanco.

According to Blanco, he spoke with other members of the House Judicial and Governmental Operations Committee, which he heads, and many wish to "reach out" to DPS Commissioner Robert Guerrero to get some facts.

"…And perhaps sit down with [Guerrero] and his officers and ask questions that [the committee] may have in regards to increased criminal activity, drug abuse, etc.," he said, adding that the meeting with the DPS commissioner would be scheduled after gathering facts from the department.

Blanco, who based his request for information on Mangloña's letter, said that updates on recent criminal cases, murders, and information on missing person cases and unsolved criminal cases, among many others, are included in his request.

"We would like to get those numbers first, then we would be able to know what questions to ask," he said. "We don't want questions to be based on hearsay."

Members of the House JGO include Blanco, Rep. John Paul Sablan (R-Saipan) as vice chair, Reps. Francisco Aguon (R-Saipan), Edwin Aldan (R-Tinian), Blas Jonathan Attao (Ind-Saipan), Jose Itibus (R-Saipan), and minority leader Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Ind-Saipan).

In a letter dated Nov. 7 addressed to Blanco and Senate Committee on Judiciary, Government, and Law chair Sen. Steve Mesngon (R-Rota), Mangloña said that DPS officers have failed to communicate with victims of crime, which he said is unacceptable because DPS has the "critical role of protecting people and ensuring people's safety."

"Victims of criminal activities are complaining that their cases have not been solved and they haven't received any information or updates from DPS," Mangloña said, adding that reports on violent criminal activities as well as drug-related crimes in the CNMI are constantly reported in the media.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, the recent finding of missing Joan Taitano's body late October 2017 at the bottom of a cliff in Marpi was significant because she was found—which wasn't the trend before.

Dating back to 1995 and based only on *Saipan Tribune* archives, 17 people have been reported missing and not been found.

Another factor that calls for an oversight on DPS are drug abuse and drug-related crimes, Mangloña said. He added that drug use and abuse have "significantly increased" over the past few years.

According to a previous statement, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, is "genuinely concerned" about public safety, and is already initiating discussions to address public safety concerns.

Power outage in Garapan on Saturday

There will be a scheduled power interruption on Saturday, Nov. 18, from 5am to 10am, to allow line crew of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to safely replace two wooden power poles with concrete poles along Beach Road in Garapan.

This is part of an ongoing hazard mitigation project of the Federal Emergency Management Agency that involves the replacement of 787 wooden poles with concrete poles.

A total of 478 wooden poles have already been replaced with their corresponding pole size. The remaining 309 are to be replaced with their corresponding concrete pole size.

Areas to be affected by Saturday's power outage are Feeder 2 (2" Partial): Beach Road, Garapan (Fishing Base to Smiling Cove Marina), Dama Di Noche St., Mapola St., Kadena Di Amor St., McDonald's/Mobil gas station, TSL Plaza building, Joeten Hafa Adai Shopping Center, Bubba Gump Shrimp, Wild Bills, IHOP, Ajisen Ramen, Coconut St., Coffee Tree Mall, Ginger Ave., Coral Tree Ave., Date St., Paseo de Marianas, Palm St., and Plumeria Ave.

No water well will be affected and only the S5 sewer lift station will be affected.

The traffic light near Bank of Guam intersection will be affected.

Because of the scale of work that will be performed, travelers are urged to take alternate routes or to exercise caution when driving through the affected areas.

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FBI'S

From Page 1

nese tourist, was indicted in federal court for allegedly operating an unlicensed business that offered trip packages to the CNMI for pregnant Chinese women seeking to give birth here.

Children born in the CNMI automatically obtain U.S. citizenship.

The indictment charged Sun with harboring illegal aliens, unlawfully employing aliens, and money laundering.

Berkland said the physician initially got to know Sun through their interaction at the Marianas Medical Clinic. Sun or an interpreter would accompany the women to their appointments.

The special agent said the physician then began living in Sun's residence in July 2017, after which she gained more knowledge about Sun's activities.

He said the physician stated that she knew Sun employed several interpreters from China who were working illegally on Saipan.

Sun also allegedly employed about 30 caretakers to cook, clean, and care for his clients while they were on island.

The physician believed Sun paid the caretakers approximately $1,000 per month, and that all of the caretakers were also working illegally.

The physician said that Sun drives a Lexus SUV.

Another confidential informant also provided information to the FBI about Sun's activities.

Berkland believes the informant to be credible, and has corroborated much of the informant's information through additional investigation such as interviews, physical surveillance, and video and audio recordings.

Berkland said that, on Oct. 4, 2017, the informant stated that Sun employed a caretaker from China who was working as a "hei gong," a Chinese term denoting an illegal worker. The informant believed Sun paid the caretaker approximately $1,200 per month.

Berkland said the informant added that the caretaker lived in the Hua Mi apartment complex in Garapan.

The informant believed Sun's clients and caretakers occupied the entire Hua Mi apartment complex.

Saipan Tribune learned from sources that Hua Mi apartment refers to the Hanamitsu Hotel and Spa.

In addition, Berkland said, the informant said the caretaker was a member of a WeChat group called "sai han a yi qun," or "Saipan Aunty Group." The group allegedly had 42 members, one of whom was the caretaker. The members worked as caretakers in the birth-tourism industry.

The informant believed that all of the caretakers were illegal and that many worked for Sun.

Berkland cited a WeChat communication where the caretaker allegedly stated that Sun paid her $1,800 per client, and that each client was for 45 days of work.

Berkland said the caretaker added that Sun paid her in cash, but that he only paid her when he was in a good mood and that he owed her several payments.

Berkland said the caretaker also stated that all of the caretakers in Hua Mi worked for Sun and added that Sun used several properties for client accommodations such as the Futaba, 747 Building, and the Sunshine Garden.

Berkland said that in an interview on Oct. 10, 2017, the caretaker stated that she had been working as a caretaker on Saipan illegally for about six months.

She also advised that she worked for Sun, who had paid her three times, each time in cash totaling $4,180.

The caretaker further stated that she had been recruited in China by a company that promised her she could enter the CNMI on a "landing visa" and then apply for a long-term resident/work visa once here.

Before arriving on Saipan, she was not aware that she was ineligible to work.

Berkland said the caretaker lived at the Hua Mi apartment complex and that she took care of one client at a time, and lived in the same unit as the client.

Berkland said the Hua Mi apartment has three floors and four units on each floor.

The agent said Sun used all of the units for his clients and caretakers.

Sun also allegedly used the Futaba and 747 Building for his clients and caretakers.

Berkland said the caretaker believed Sun employed about 30 caretakers, not one of whom had a work visa. All of the caretakers made approximately the same salary. She believed Sun paid all of the caretakers in cash or via account transfers in China.

Berkland said that, on Oct. 17, 2017, a cooperating source agreed to covertly record a dinner conversation with Sun.

The agent said the recording device malfunctioned, but the cooperating source nonetheless reported that during their conversations, Sun admitted knowing that his caretakers were illegally present and working in the CNMI, and that they were duped into coming to Saipan by a company in China promising permanent residency in the U.S.

Berkland said he was present during a verbal internet communication between a cooperating source and Sun last Nov. 1, in which Sun in Chinese stated that Saipan is really small and that he will find the cooperating source and he will make that the cooperating source give him back all of his money.

Berkland said he believes that Sun's statements were intended as threats to physically harm the cooperating source.

KILILI

From Page 1

have a pool of workers in the Marianas," Sablan said in a news briefing yesterday.

The CW-1 program, or the CNMI Transitional Worker program, allows the CNMI to hire foreign workers; it has been in place since 2009. It was set to expire in 2014 but was extended to Dec. 31, 2019. As of publication, U.S. Congress has yet to allow extensions for the CW-1 program but Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Sablan both noted that an extension proposal is in the works.

Sablan added that in order to continue providing the workforce necessary for the growing economy and to "do some justice" to some "long-term guest workers," a new visa category could be created.

"[The new visa category] would be for those individuals who have been here for a long period of time," said Sablan, adding that the new category could be something that need not be renewed annually, unlike the CW-1 visa.

"…Move [the longtime workers] into this new category where their visas have to be approved every three years rather than every year and probably allow their dependents to be able to work," he said, also noting that the new visa category would not be counted as CW-1, therefore not contributing to the numerical limit the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services sets every fiscal year.

Though nothing is final yet, Sablan noted that discussions are occurring with a "working group," which includes Torres' office, U.S. Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), as well as other bicameral and bipartisan members of Congress.

"We are hoping to get this done by 2018 but if necessary, 2019, but I am confident that we can get this done," said Sablan.

USCIS has yet to release a numerical limit on CW-1 visas for fiscal year 2018. It is required by law to set a limit every fiscal year.

A previous USCIS statement said the *Federal Register* notice has yet to be signed and released, causing the delay in the agency releasing the numerical limits.

According to an October 2017 Government Accountability Office report, the CNMI heavily depends on foreign labor. It indicated that the CNMI's ability to repay its debts may be jeopardized by future labor shortages.

In response to the GAO report, Torres said that although the economy is doing well, there is still a "vast need for improvement."

ANOTHER

From Page 1

under the zoning law.

PAI also operates two other poker rooms on Saipan: the High Roller 5 on Beach Road, Garapan and High Roller 7 on Middle Road in Gualo Rai.

PAI, through counsel Joseph E. Horey, wants the court to affirm the company's right to continue operating High Roller 1 and High Roller 3 at their current locations until at least Jan. 26, 2018.

In the alternative, PAI asked the court to invalidate the law that would require them to relocate the two arcades as unconstitutional and in violation of the due process clause and equal protection clauses of the CNMI Constitution.

Saipan Local Law 18-5 states that within four years after Oct. 25, 2013, all gambling machine businesses shall be located in areas allowed by law. Other laws also restrict the operation of adult gambling machine businesses to certain geographic areas on Saipan.

PAI sought an injunction to prevent the government, the Zoning board, and Blanco from imposing any fine or taking any other adverse action against PAI until at least Jan. 26, 2018.

Horey said since PAI raises several serious legal questions, and since the balance of hardships tips in its favor, a preliminary injunction should be granted while the case is being tried.

Horey said the business licenses of High Roller 1 and High Roller 3 were renewed by Finance for a one-year period ending Jan. 16, 2018.

Horey said the Zoning board has announced that penalties will be assessed against the operators of adult gambling machine businesses operating in unauthorized zones on or after Oct. 25, 2017, even if such businesses still hold valid and unexpired business licenses.

"There is no rational basis, when enacting a law to take effect four years after its enactment, for requiring it to take effect during the term of an annual business license rather than at the expiration of such term," Horey pointed out.

He said there is no logical or rational basis for prohibiting adult gambling machine businesses in the area where High Roller 1 is located while allowing it in the adjacent areas, as well as in the numerous hotel within High Roller 1's area.

In his declaration, Gebhard said that High Roller 1 and 3 account for about 60 percent of PAI's total gross revenue.

Meanwhile, Gebhard said, PAI's expenses, such as employee payroll, rent, utilities, insurance, taxes, etc., account for approximately two-thirds of its gross revenues, leaving approximately one-third as profit. Therefore, he said, closing either one would all but eliminate the company's profit margin.

He said the closure of both High Roller 1 and 3 would mean that PAI's expenses would exceed its revenues to such a degree that it would not be possible to stay in business without drastically reducing expenses, including such steps as laying off up to 80 percent of its workforce.

Sin Ho Nam and his company, Winnerslife Inc., and Nam's poker machines operator, Dan Bi Choi LLC, recently filed a similar lawsuit against the same defendants.

XTRA

From Page 1

Airways Pacific operations manager.

"XTRA Airways is in continuous discussion with Dream Pacific and a meeting will happen soon in Miami," he added.

The contractual issues between XTRA Airways and Dream Pacific Aviation ensued when the latter supposedly did not honor the terms of the agreement.

Dream Pacific Aviation Services HK Ltd. pursued XTRA Airways last year to provide services between China and Saipan.

However, contractual issues delayed the project. A company in charge of ticket sales under Dream Pacific also advised XTRA Airways that the contractually obligated schedule was to be reduced by nearly 70 percent, leading to the carrier carrying the financial burden.

"What we have here is a breach of contract. Another thing is that both parties agreed that 270 is the minimum number of flying hours in order for XTRA to keep crew and maintain aircraft costs. But for our first month, we only used 59 hours. That achieved only 22 percent of the goal," Nolte said.

"XTRA Airways was set to fly to China-Saipan six times a week in the 4am and 5am arrival times. Instead of flying six times a week, we were down to only two flights a week," he added.

Nolte said that XTRA Airways was really just a flight provider and that the contract of carriage is between Dream Pacific and the passengers because XTRA Airways does not have control on ticket sales or accommodations for the passengers when they arrive on Saipan.

"We are in the business of providing aircraft and taking passengers from A to B. That is what we intend to do, whether it is still with same client, Dream Pacific, or with a different one. We intend to pursue business in the CNMI because the market is up and the need for the service is there," Nolte said.

"While flights are suspended and talks are happening, we intend to bring the service back. We have infrastructure in place to fly into China and we have permits from the U.S. Department of Transportation and Federal Aviation Administration," Nolte added.

He said that local hires have a choice to work in their offices in the mainland while operations here are halted.

"They are still employed with us; nothing has changed. We take care of our people. Some took the option to continue working in the mainland while some opted to stay here because of responsibilities they have to attend to here and we truly understand that," he said.

"We remain optimistic as XTRA and Dream Pacific are finding viable solutions to the situation. We will be in service to the CNMI, no matter what the meetings and talks turn out with Dream Pacific. The possibility of having new clients is there as the CNMI is a growing market," he added.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

PTSA meeting for Kagman schools

Kagman cluster of schools will be having a Parents Teachers Students Association meeting on Thursday, Nov. 16, at 5pm in the ChaCha Oceanview Middle School cafeteria. All parents and guardians are encouraged to attend this meeting. Call the school at 237-3921, 664-4100, or 664-3911 if you have any questions or concerns. ***(PR)***

Holiday closures at AMP

American Memorial Park officials would like to inform the public that the Visitor Center will be closed in observance of the following federal holidays:

- Nov. 23, 2017: Thanksgiving Day
- Dec. 25, 2017: Christmas Day
- Jan. 1, 2018: New Year's Day

On these days, the rest of the park will remain open. Park staff would like to encourage the public to explore the Visitor Center. With the exception of the holidays, the visitor center is open every day from 9am to 5pm.

For more information about this or other happenings at the park, contact lead park ranger Brooke Nevitt at 234-7207 x 2020 or via email at brooke_nevitt@nps.gov. ***PR)***

PH consulate outreach this week

The Philippine Consulate General in Guam, in coordination with the Office of Honorary Consul Eli Arago, will conduct a mobile consular outreach in the CNMI this week until Nov. 17, 2017, at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe, from 9am to 6pm. Those who wish to renew their passport may submit their application at the Finasisu Terraces, Apartment Building D, second floor (top of the Mini-Mart Store), Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm (12pm to 1pm, break time). For any inquiry about passport renewal, call Mel Santos at 233-6293. ***(PR)***

FOA meeting at Everest Kitchen today

The Friends of the Arts will hold its first member meeting in two years today, Nov. 15, from 6:30pm to 9pm, at the Everest Kitchen Restaurant, on Micro Beach Road across the American Memorial Park and next to Bridge Capital in Garapan. The meeting will also include musical and thespian entertainment. Meal cost is $15 for adults and $8 for children under 11. Confirm your attendance by email to Frank Gibson at flgibson@yahoo.com or 287-7476. ***(PR)***

Military training at Orote Point, FDM

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. military will conduct training at Orote Point today, Nov. 15, from 9am to 8pm. The training will be contained within the following coordinates: 13° 25' 24"N/144° 38' 15"E.

The training is designed to enhance the readiness of military personnel. Residents in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity associated with the trainings.

Training will also take place at the island of Farallon de Medinilla on Nov. 16-18, from 10am to 11:59pm. ***(PR)***

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Transmission: Automatic
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Transmission: Automatic
Est. Mileage: 3865
Color: Metal Stream
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Engine: 2.4 Liter
Transmission: Automatic
Est. Mileage: 23620
Color: Mercury Blue
$15,995

2016 Kia Sportage LX
Stk# G7855268
Drivetrain: AWD
Engine: 2.4 Liter
Transmission: Automatic
Est. Mileage: 6677
Color: Silver
$19,795

2014 Ford Escape SE
Stk#EUB67717
Drivetrain: FWD
Engine: 1.6 Liter Ecoboost
Transmission: Automatic
Est. Mileage: 12644
Color: Ruby Red
$19,995

2016 Kia Sportage EX
Stk# G7840712
Drivetrain: FWD
Engine: 2.4 Liter
Transmission: Automatic
Est. Mileage: 19778
Color: Black
$21,795

2017 Kia Sportage LX
Stk# H71962822
Drivetrain: AWD
Engine: 2.4 Liter
Transmission: Automatic
Est. Mileage: 3787
Color: Clear White
$22,995

2015 Nissan Pathfinder S
Stk# FC610104
Drivetrain: 4WD
Engine: 3.5 Liter
Transmission: Automatic
Est. Mileage: 29560
Color: Glacier White
$24,495

2013 Nissan Maxima SV Sport
Stk# DC816012
Drivetrain: FWD
Engine: 3.5 Liter
Transmission: Automatic
Est. Mileage: 20568
Color: Brilliant Silver
$24,995

2014 Nissan Murano SL
Stk# EW411794
Drivetrain: FWD
Engine: 3.5 Liter
Transmission: Automatic
Est. Mileage: 26886
Color: Gun Metallic
$24,995

2010 Ford F150 SVT Raptor
Stk# AFD47403
Drivetrain: 4WD
Engine: 5.4 Liter
Transmission: Automatic
Est. Mileage: 37860
Color: Molten Orange
$36,995

2016 Ford F150 Super Crew Cab XL
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GAO updates Kilili on Agent Orange investigation

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) says that the Government Accountability Office remains on track with the Agent Orange investigation that he requested in April.

Responding to constituent concern about exposure to Agent Orange, a defoliant widely used by the U.S. in the Vietnam War, Sablan enlisted GAO to report on any possible contamination in the Marianas.

He made the request together with Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo (D-Guam) and Rep. Ron DeSantis (R-Florida), who are also concerned that the toxic chemical may have affected people they represent.

"We want to know where the U.S. stored, transferred, and used Agent Orange or its component chemicals and of any contamination of those sites that may have occurred or may be occurring," Sablan said. "The U.S. has already acknowledged that anyone exposed to this toxic herbicide can be presumed to have long-term health risks.

"If there was any Agent Orange in the Marianas, we need to know about it. Our Vietnam-era veterans and other military personnel and civilians deserve to have certainty about this concern and to get the help that they are entitled to, if they were exposed."

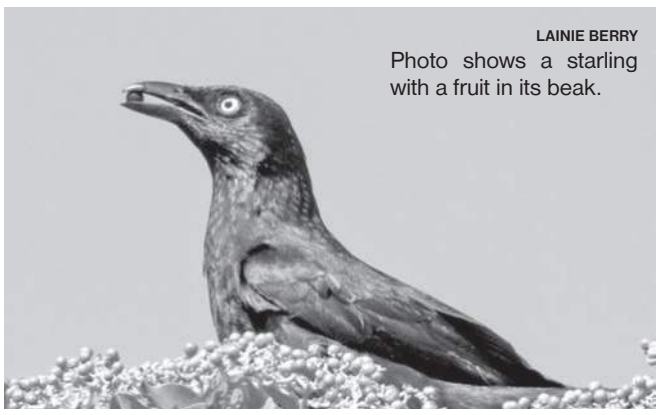
Last Friday, in a communication to Sablan GAO affirmed its commitment to examine issues related to Agent Orange, including where it was located and its health and environmental risks.

GAO said it expects the review to be completed by spring 2018.

Over 11 million gallons of Agent Orange were used in the Vietnam war, but the defoliant was also used in Korea along the demilitarized zone and at military facilities in the U.S. and other countries. Air Force and Air Force Reserve members who worked around C-123 aircraft may also have been exposed. The C-123 was used to transport Agent Orange and for aerial spraying of the herbicide.

According to the Veterans Administration, there is a legal presumption that "certain diseases are a result of exposure to these herbicides. This 'presumptive policy' simplifies the process for receiving compensation for these diseases since VA foregoes the normal requirements of proving that an illness began during or was worsened by military service." ***(PR)***

Marianas terrestrial conservation conference at GCC set this week



LAINIE BERRY
Photo shows a starling with a fruit in its beak.

ANN MARIE GAWEL
Photo shows a snail of the Partula gibba specie.

Researchers will share the latest information on the unique land habitats in the Mariana Islands at the Marianas Terrestrial Conservation Conference and Workshop that will be held on Nov. 18 and 19.

The conference will be hosted at the Guam Community College in the Multi-Purpose Auditorium (MPA, Building 400). Researchers will discuss invasive species management, research on endangered birds and plants, watershed management and other ecological topics. Presenters will come from both the CNMI and Guam.

Visit https://marianasterrestrialconservation.weebly.com/ for more information, to register for the conference, and to sign up for field trips. For questions, contact Haldre Rogers at haldre@iastate.edu or Joni Kerr jonikerr@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality
Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
www.crm.gov.mp

Eli Cabrera, Administrator — Janice E. Castro, Acting Director

MEETING OF THE CRM AGENCY OFFICIALS

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt. Governor Victor B. Hocog through the Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) hereby give notice that a CRM Agency Officials meeting will be held on Monday, November 20, 2017 at 9:30AM at the BECQ 2nd Floor Main Conference Room, Lower Gualo Rai, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. **PRELIMINARY MATTERS**
A. Call to Order
B. Roll Call
C. Adoption of Agenda
D. Adoption of October 25, 2017 Meeting Minutes

II. **PERMIT APPLICATION REVIEW**
A. Project: Chieng Tan dba Zen Homes, LLC – Proposal to construct a four-story apartment building comprised of two- and three-bedroom apartment units with parking and landscaping for commercial use in Gualo Rai.
CRM Permit Application No. SMS-2017-X-039
a) Project Presentation
b) Discussion & Review of Project
c) CRM Permit Application Status Determination, *Final Determination*

B. Project: Isa Villas Partners, LLC – Proposal to construct multi-family development complex with two 3-story concrete buildings of 27 housing units on Capitol Hill.
CRM Permit Application No. SMS-2017-X-111
d) Project Presentation
e) Discussion & Review of Project
f) CRM Permit Application Status Determination, *Final Determination*

C. Project: Marianas Management Corporation – Proposal to build Gualo Rai Office Park on the corner of Chalan Pale Arnold (Middle Road) and Gualo Rai Road in Gualo Rai. The planned development includes two office buildings and a new U.S. District Courthouse building.
CRM Permit Application No. SMS-2018-X-08
a) Project Presentation
b) Discussion & Review of Project
c) CRM Permit Application Status Determination, *Certification of Completeness*

D. Project: Man Bao Corp. Royal View Hotel – The Royal View Hotel proposes to construct a 5-story hotel building with amenities on the former "Sunleader Market" site on Beach Road in Garapan. The development will include a total of 51 guest rooms with single and double rooms, a snack bar and dining areas with seating capacity for 72, and 42 parking spaces.
CRM Permit Application No. SMS-2017-X-011
a) Project Presentation
b) Discussion & Review of Project
c) CRM Permit Application Status Determination, *Certification of Completeness*

E. Project: Man Bao Corp. dba Fantastic Gardens – After the fact permit application for construction of a 3-story hotel with twenty-six rooms immediately south of Hans Tire Shop and north of the former cockfight arena.
CRM Permit Application No. SMS-2018-X-016
a) Project Presentation
b) Discussion & Review of Project
c) CRM Permit Application Status Determination, *Certification of Completeness*

III. **OTHER MATTERS**

A. Discussion of Pending Projects
a. Verify Certification of Completeness, Saipan Vegas
B. Regulatory Revision Update

IV. **ADJOURNMENT**
All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony regarding the above agenda items. (NOTE: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) (7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session).

/s/ JANICE E. CASTRO
Acting Director, DCRM

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB18-CAO-012
SUBMISSION DATE: DECEMBER 15, 2017 TIME: 10:30 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF A CLASS "H" PICK-UP TRUCK 4X2 FOUR (4) FULL DOORS FOR THE CAROLINIAN AFFAIRS OFFICE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ JOHN I. TAGABUEL
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
2018-CDA-01-RFP
CLOSING DATE: Tuesday, November 21, 2017 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"Architectural/Engineering Services"

THE SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE PICKED UP AT THE COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OFFICE, LOCATED ON THE 2ND FLOOR, CDA BUILDING., OLEAI, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES AND KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAIVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/s/ MANUEL A. SABLAN
Executive Director

/s/HERMAN S. SABLAN, Director
Division of Procurement & Supply

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
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Eli D. Cabrera, Administrator — Janice E. Castro, Acting Director

PUBLIC NOTICE

From the COMMONWEALTH OF THE NOTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM of the CNMI'S DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

DATE: November 15, 2017

NOTICE: The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ) Division of Coastal Resource Management (DCRM) is currently reviewing a federal consistency determination request from Mobile Oil Marianas Islands, Inc. regarding the proposed renewal by the U.S. EPA of NPDES permit #MP0020397for continued operations at the Mobile Saipan Terminal.

As part of the NPDES reissuance application, Mobile has requested a new Section 401 Water Quality Certification and mixing zone authorization from the CNMI Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ). More information about the facility and proposed discharge is available via EPA's Fact Sheet and draft permit: https://www.epa.gov/npdes-permits/mobil-saipan-terminal-puerto-rico-village-mp-mp0020397

Federal consistency is a provision of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) that requires federal actions that affect the coastal zone to be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of a coastal state's federally approved coastal management plan.

Comments on whether the project is consistent with the enforceable policies of the CNMI's coastal management program can be submitted to the Division of Coastal Resource Management at emilynorthrop@becq.gov.mp.

This public notice has been published for compliance with 15 CFR § 930.42. DCRM is soliciting public comments for fifteen (15) days, starting on November 15, 2017 and ending on November 30, 2017 in order to give the public a sufficient opportunity to develop and provide comments on whether the proposed project is consistent with management program enforceable policies and still allow DCRM to issue its concurrence or objection within the sixty (60) day response period. We welcome your feedback and thank you for your consideration.

/s/ JANICE E. CASTRO
Acting Director, DCRM

CHARITY R. HODSON (F0487)
ATTORNEY AT LAW
PLATA DRIVE, WHISPERING PALMS (CHALAN KIYA)
P.O. BOX 502607 CK
SAIPAN, MP 96950
TELEPHONE: 670-2341615
FACSIMILE: 670-234-5749

ATTORNEY FOR PETITIONER JOHN B. BARRINEAU

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

CIVIL ACTION NO. 17-0236

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF WILLIAM R. BARRINEAU Deceased.

[Proposed] ORDER GRANTING REQUEST TO RESCHEDULE AND AMENDED NOTICE OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION

Date: November 30, 2017
Time: 9:00am
Judge: Joseph N. Camacho

Good cause appearing, the hearing in this matter on Petitioner's Petition for Letters of Administration currently scheduled for November 9, 2017, at 9:00 a.m. is hereby continued to the date and time above set forth.

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE WILLIAM R. BARRINEAU OR HIS ESTATE:
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that **John B. Barrineau** has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to issue Letters of Administration for the Estate of William R. Barrineau, the deceased. The attorney for Petitioner is Charity R. Hodson, Attorney at Law, whose address is Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 502607, Saipan, MP 96950

The hearing on the Petition is scheduled to be heard on the date and time set forth above at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at the hearing.

Any and all person, creditors, or entities having claims against the deceased or his Estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within sixty (60) days of this publication or the claim(s) will be baited. A copy of your claim should also be sent to **CHARITY R. HODSON**, Attorney at Law, at the address herein-above indicated.

Dated this 7th day of November, 2017.
/s/ Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho

MICHAEL A. WHITE, ESQ. F0122
THE LAW OFFICES OF MICHAEL A. WHITE, LLC
POST OFFICE BOX 5222
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950
TEL: (670) 234-6547
FAX: (670) 234-9537

ATTORNEYS FOR Plaintiff

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, Plaintiff, -v- ANTONIO C. BARCINAS and RAMONA S.N. BARCINAS, Defendants. : CIVIL ACTION NO. 16-0130

FIRST AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on September 15, 2017, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot no. 018 B 159, situated in Tanapag, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 901 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat no. 018 B 29, the original of which was recorded on July 17, 1997, as Document no. 97-1706, at the Commonwealth Recorder's Office, Saipan.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, December 22, 2017, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at the Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 27th day of October, 2017

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

KIMBERLY BAUTISTA
Saipan Chamber of Commerce members cut the ribbon to the newly installed benches at the CNMI Veteran's Cemetery last Friday.

Veterans Cemetery gets benches

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

In honor of CNMI veterans who have already passed away, the Saipan Chamber of Commerce has taken the lead in having concrete benches installed at the CNMI Veterans Cemetery.

Last Friday, the 60th Commemoration Committee of World War II, in coordination with the Armed Forces Committee of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, did a ribbon cutting ceremony for four new benches at the cemetery.

American Red Cross NMI Chapter executive director John Hirsch told the attendees that the benches would benefit those who pay their respects to the fallen warriors at the cemetery.

"These improvements are a step forward to enhancing our veterans cemetery," he said.

According to Bryan Clayton, who chairs the Armed Forces Committee of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, the project was in the works for about five months before they finally to an agreement that benches would be a good addition to the cemetery.

"We were really looking for something that was fitting for the area and to make it where it wasn't too obtrusive and that it would fit in and the benches were one of the many ideas that came up and it was the one we decided on," he said.

Clayton said the benches not only enhances the area but also provide seats for visitors. "It now provides a place for family, friends, and visitors who come here to kind of reflect and sit in a nice place and just relax," he said.

According to Clayton, the overall cost of the project was more of less $5,000. "These benches are all made from scratch," he added.

When asked if additional benches would be added, Clayton said that further improvements entail adding more benches but they are also looking at other improvement projects. "We have a couple other projects that we're looking at. It may entail adding more benches, but we have some other ideas," he said.

Also present at the ribbon cutting ceremony was Rep. Alice Igitol (R-Saipan), who was there to both support the enhancements and to visit a veteran loved one with her sister, Lucy Deleon Guerrero.

According to Deleon Guerrero, mother to a fallen soldier, she is glad that families of fallen veterans are now provided a place where they are able to sit and relax while visiting loved ones. "When we come and visit, there's no place for us to sit. This would be very helpful to us," she said.

Igitol is thankful to the Chamber that worked to install the benches. "We thank them very much for this donation to the veteran's families. It's very convenient," she said.

Contract awarded to renovate restroom at AMP tennis court

The contract for construction improvements at the American Memorial Park's tennis court restroom facility has been awarded and the work will begin immediately.

The park expects construction work will not last more than five months.

During this time, the tennis courts will remain open for public use.

Improvements to the restroom facility include renovating the fixtures, retiling the restrooms, as well as improving accessibility to the building.

During the work, the construction area will be closed to the public. For safety reasons the public is advised to stay clear of the area.

The National Park Service regrets the short notice for tennis court restroom closure but hopes completion of building renovations will be enjoyed by all in the future.

For additional information contact project inspector Nathaniel D. Entilla at (671) 477-7278 ext. 1001 or at nathaniel_entilla@nps.gov. ***(NPS)***

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UOG gets $200K to improve Marianas herbarium

A unique and diverse range of flora native to Micronesia will soon be properly preserved for people around the world to study and observe.

The University of Guam hosts the largest functional herbarium in the region and the only one in the Marianas. An herbarium is a collection of plants and their data used for scientific study.

Over the years, the specimens have outgrown the space to house them. But recently, UOG was awarded nearly $100,000 through the Museums for America grant to complete necessary upgrades. With the award came a matching donation from a person very close to the heart of the university—the late Dr. Lynn Raulerson. Her generosity brought the total award amount to about $200,000 to be spread out over a three-year period.

"When you do museum work, you have to be crazy passionate about it," said Dr. Wei Xiao, assistant professor of biology and the UOG Herbarium's curator. "I'm so excited about this award. For researchers and students from off island, they don't just have to study what's in their backyard. They can study things in other regions, and that exchange only happens in a modern herbarium."

Raulerson managed the UOG Herbarium until her death in 2012. Xiao took over as curator in 2014.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dr. Wei Xiao displays one plant specimen out of the thousands housed in the University of Guam Herbarium.

Improvements to the UOG Herbarium, which will start right away, include organizing the plant samples into a database and digitizing their information. Xiao also wants to replace equipment and materials that have worn down over the years.

The importance of the UOG Herbarium rests in the ability to share its information to those locally and overseas. With the new digitization of the specimens, people from around the world can study the endemic plants of the Micronesian region.

"With the new upgrades, people who are outside of Guam can have access to what we have," Xiao said. "We can create research interests and conservation interests and use this as a way to advertise what we have. Hopefully we're going to bring a lot more attention, effort, and resources to help better understand our ecosystem." ***(UOG)***

Illusionist teams up with JKPL to offer free magic camp

You've seen him as a finalist on NBC's "America's Got Talent," on NBC's "The Tonight show with Jimmy Fallon," as a winner on the CW's "Penn & Teller: Fool Us," "Masters of Illusion," and SYFY Channel's "Wizard Wars." Now it's your chance to learn magic from this award-winning illusionist in person at Joeten-Kiyu Public Library this December.

Leon Etienne, who is currently starring in "Magic Rocks!" at the Sandcastle Theater on Saipan, has teamed up with the library to offer his incredible magic camp to anyone on Saipan.

By attending magic camp, you will receive personal instruction from Etienne and learn to perform amazing magic tricks. You get your very own magic set to bring home so you can share the magic you learn with family and friends. You'll learn incredible close-up magic, basic performance skills, audience management, and so much more.

"I am thrilled to be teaming up with the library to bring my magic camp to the Saipan community. Who doesn't want to learn a few good magic tricks? This is great fun! This will be a great activity for the children and youth…this holiday season," said Etienne.

"Magic Camp@My Public Library" is free and sponsored by the Friends of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library.

All books and magic supplies will be covered by the Friends of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library. Limited seating on a first registered basis.

The camp is open to ages 7 years old to 18 years old. Registration is now open on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota at the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, Tinian Public Library, and the Antonio C. Atalig Memorial Public Library (Rota).

Parents and guardians must sign a liability waiver form on behalf of their participating children and must adhere to public library policies and procedures.

Participants must have a valid Joeten-Kiyu Public Library card free of fines to register. Deadline to register is Friday, Dec. 15, 2017, at 5pm.

The magic camp at the JKPL will take place on Dec. 27, from 9am to 12pm, Dec. 28, from 9am to 12pm, and Dec. 29, from 10am to 12pm. There is limited seating. First come, first registered basis.

The magic camp at the Tinian Public Library will take place on Tinian on Jan. 4, 2017. The one at the Antonio C. Atalig Memorial Library on Rota is still being arranged.

For more information and to sign up to attend the Saipan magic camp, contact Rosalinda Ulloa or Beth Demapan at 235-7315/6 or email bethdemapanjkpl@gmail.com or rosalindaulloajkpl@gmail.com.

To sign up for the magic camp on Tinian, contact Marvieluz Syed at 433-0504 or email the Tinian Public Library at tinianpubliclibrary@gmail.com.

To sign up for the magic camp on Rota, contact Bergitt Maratita at 532-7328. ***(PR)***

Tamanaha rejoins FHB

HAGÅTÑA, Guam—Alan Tamanaha has rejoined First Hawaiian Bank as vice president and business banking officer, according to an announcement by First Hawaiian Bank chairman and chief executive officer Bob Harrison yesterday.

Tamanaha

Based in Hawaii, Tamanaha provides credit training, underwriting supervision, and credit management for the Guam and Saipan commercial team. He has over 37 years of banking industry experience and his previous experience with FHB from 2002 to 2016 included commercial lending, relationship management, business development and credit administration.

FHB (www.FHB.com) was founded in 1858 as Bishop & Co. ***(PR)***

Program managers complete grants management training

Program managers from various government departments and agencies recently completed a five-day federal grants management training.

According to Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson, the workshop was provided in collaboration with Graduate School USA for a high-level overview of current changes in grants management regulations.

"Federal grants are used for many critical programs in the Commonwealth, and our office has been afforded the opportunity to stay attuned to the most current regulations to assist every department and ensure they are knowledgeable of these requirements. The grants management training focused on the Uniform Guidance Administration Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements," Larson said.

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Over 60 program managers from various government departments and agencies recently completed a five-day federal grants management training.

Ryan Camacho, a technical financial analyst with the Department of Finance, noted that a total of 68 direct program managers, along with personnel from the Department of Finance and the Office of Management and Budget, took part in the grants training. Program managers were also able to address more specific concerns about the new regulations with the Graduate USA instructor.

"The new uniform guidelines are definitely beneficial and although there are no immediate changes for the Department of Finance in regards to grants management, we are looking into amending current local policies and procedures, such as travel regulations, procurement and inventory management, reporting requirements, and audit processes with this newly acquired knowledge and insight. Overall, the training received positive feedback and we hope we can continue to provide more on-island training," Camacho said.

Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management planner Querlaine Blas said that federal grants such as those that deal with homeland security and disaster preparedness have many requirements that must be followed.

"The federal management grants training I feel was useful for any individual in the grant field. The instructor gave an in-depth look into the uniform grant guidance and highlighted several important aspects such as the importance of strong internal controls, having SOP's in place, and consistent and timely reporting. Overall, it gave me an understanding of best practices to remain in compliance," Blas said.

Epi Cabrera, the administrator for the Office of Grants Management, received his grants management certification late last month, not only enhancing his personal knowledge base but also increasing overall grant approval and government efficiency.

"We have been very successful in not only being awarded new and existing federal grant awards, but also ensuring that we are compliant with federal grant requirements in order to improve our public services and infrastructure. Federal grants encompass multiple government services, such as homeland security, public safety, education, public assistance under Federal Emergency Management Agency, and most recently, our efforts to detect and eradicate the coconut rhinoceros beetles on Rota. We are pleased that program managers are taking part in maintaining their compliance and strengthening their knowledge of the federal grant process. Grants remain one of the crucial resources available to us as we move forward in improving the Commonwealth together," said Gov. Ralph DLG Torres. ***(PR)***

FHB employees, retirees give $756K to 34 charities

HONOLULU, Hawaii—First Hawaiian Bank employees and retirees contributed $756,679 to 34 charities as part of the bank's annual Kokua Mai employee giving campaign, according to an announcement yesterday by Bob Harrison, First Hawaiian Bank chairman and chief executive officer.

Since Kokua Mai's inception in 2007, bank employees and retirees have donated more than $6.9 million to support charities in Hawaii, Guam, and the CNMI.

"All of us at First Hawaiian are thrilled to be kicking off the holiday giving season with this gift to support 34 Kokua Mai agencies," said Harrison. "Giving back to the communities we serve is a longstanding tradition that our employees proudly continue today. Many of our employees also choose to volunteer their time and talents to help various non-profits throughout the year."

For the second year in a row, 99 percent of First Hawaiian Bank employees made monetary contributions to assist Kokua Mai charities.

The bank, its employees, and the First Hawaiian Bank Foundation annually donate more than $4.0 million to over 400 charities, making it one of the largest corporate contributors to charity in Hawaii.

Each year the bank's branches serve as collection points for various charitable causes, including the Star-Advertiser Good Neighbor Fund during the holiday season, and Special Olympics. The bank also made the first donation of $25,000 to establish the Aloha Relief for Harvey Fund to support recovery and relief efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey.

First Hawaiian Bank's Kokua Mai giving program was started in 2007 to ensure 100 percent of their employee donations go directly to local charities. The internal online giving program is completely run by employees with all administrative costs covered by the bank. This year's Kokua Mai campaign ran from Oct. 1 through Oct. 31, with employees conducting department fundraisers throughout the four-week period.

Kokua Mai Employee Giving Campaign
101
November 8, 2017
Pay to the Order of
Kokua Mai Agencies
$ 756,679.00
Seven hundred fifty six thousand six hundred seventy nine
First Hawaiian Bank
for 2017 Kokua Mai Donations

From left, Bob Harrison, First Hawaiian Bank chairman and CEO, First Hawaiian Bank employees Lylia Ishihara and Sharleen Anderson, and Iris Matsumoto, First Hawaiian Bank executive vice president, Human Resources Division.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The charities that will benefit this year from the Kokua Mai campaign include the American Red Cross, Hawaii, Guam, NMI chapters; Aloha Harvest, Aloha United Way, Ayuda Foundation, Big Brothers, Big Sisters Hawaii, Boys and Girls Club of Hawaii, Catholic Charities, Child and Family Service, Domestic Violence Action Center, Easter Seals Hawaii, Family Programs Hawaii, Goodwill Industries of Hawaii, Inc., Hale Makua. Hawaii Children's Cancer Foundation, Hawaii Foodbank, Hawaii Island United Way, HUGS, Imua Family Services, Kama`aina Kids, Kauai Hospice, Kauai United Way, Lanai Community Association, Make-A-Wish Hawaii and Guam, Maui United Way, Prevent Child Abuse Hawaii, Palama Settlement, Pali Momi Women's Center Fund, Salvation Army, Hawaiian & Pacific Island Division; Special Olympics Hawaii, Inc.; Teach for America, and Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center.

FHB (www.FHB.com) was founded in 1858. ***(PR)***

Former Saipan resident attends APEC Voices of the Future 2017

Calvary Christian Academy alumna Midori Nishida represented Japan as a youth delegate during the APEC Voices of the Future 2017 held in Da Nang, Vietnam from Nov. 6 to 10.

Nishida

Founded in 2007, the APEC Voices of the Future is the key youth dialogue platform that is held in conjunction with the APEC CEO Summit and APEC Economic Leaders' Week. The program aims to encourage students to know more about the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, promote cross-cultural exchanges, and prepare youth delegates to become future leaders of their economies.

Youth delegates from the 21 economies gathered together to discuss this year's theme of the APEC Summit: "Creating New Dynamism, Fostering a Shared Future." Nishida was selected as the Japanese delegate to give a speech on Japan's commitment to achieving human resources development in the digital age, economic, financial and social inclusion, and innovation.

She addressed the issue of a shrinking population and workforce in Japan in her speech. "As Japanese policymakers and politicians scramble to tackle the issue of a shrinking workforce, one solution is often avoided in the national dialogue altogether: opening the doors to immigrants."

Nishida added, "Discussions of immigration among policymakers remain tricky in a homogenous society such as Japan; however, the reality is that what Japan needs now are foreign talent and diversity. What Japan needs is diversity, not just for addressing our shrinking workforce, but for encouraging and fostering innovation through diverse perspectives which in turn, enables economic growth in the Asia Pacific."

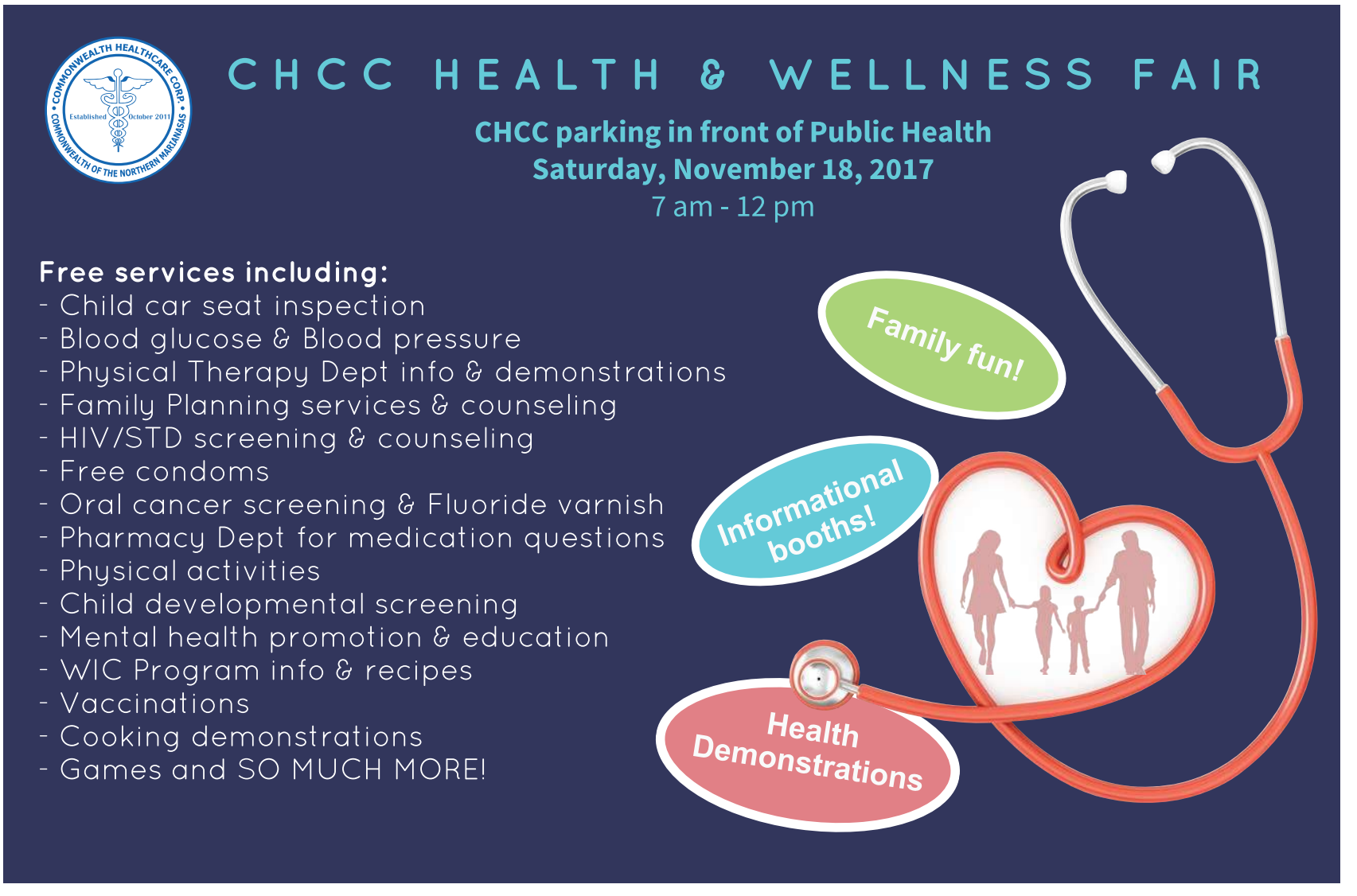
Although she represented Japan during the program, Midori brought up her experiences growing up on Saipan during discussions on climate change and indigenous rights.

"Combating climate change is everyone's responsibility as it affects us all. I believe it's crucial to invite the islands in the Pacific that are feeling the immediate effects such as rising sea levels into international dialogues on global warming." She also commented that it's important to preserve the cultures and languages of indigenous populations and ensure they are given equal opportunities.

During the APEC CEO Summit, Nishida was able to listen to talks given by world leaders and CEO's such as U.S. President Donald Trump, President of People's Republic of China Xi Jinping, and Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte. She and the other Japanese youth delegates were also able to meet Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Speaking of her experiences at the APEC Summit, she said: "I think it's important for young people to be involved in dialogues on today's most pressing issues and the APEC Voices of the Future was a great platform for our voices to be heard by world leaders. The future belongs to us youths, therefore we should take the responsibility to ensure a better future for generations to come."

Nishida grew up on Saipan and is currently pursuing a double masters in Public Policy at the University of Tokyo and the National University of Singapore. ***(PR)***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- HIV/STD screening & counseling
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- Physical activities
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- WIC Program info & recipes
- Vaccinations
- Cooking demonstrations
- Games and SO MUCH MORE!
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Informational booths!
Health Demonstrations

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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HE'S THE JUDGE WHO DISPLAYED THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN A COURTHOUSE.
MAYBE HE SHOULD HAVE READ THEM.
JUDGE ROY MOORE ACCUSED OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT
NEWS
DISTRIBUTED BY KFS/NAS 2017
Las Vegas Sun
MIKE SMITH

EDITORIAL

Gun laws work

Gun laws work. They will never stop every homicide, but they clearly work.

Data shows that states with stronger firearm safety laws have lower firearm homicide rates, as well as lower nonfatal firearm injury rates.

Universal background checks and a national ban on military—style assault weapons and high—capacity magazines must be the next steps to reduce the severity and frequency of the carnage.

U.S. Sen. Patty Murray and her Democratic colleagues in the Senate introduced a smart new assault—weapons ban proposal on Wednesday that would not only stop the sale and manufacture of new military—style assault weapons, but would limit the sale or transfer of existing weapons of this type.

The Washington state Legislature should show some leadership and pass its own assault—weapons ban during the 2018 legislative session, a step seven other states, including California, New Jersey and Hawaii, plus the District of Columbia, have taken.

To see why gun laws matter, compare Washington state to Texas, the location of America's most recent mass—shooting tragedy. Texas had 18 state firearm laws and a firearm homicide rate of 4.04 deaths per 100,000 in 2015, according to the State Firearm Law Database collected by the Boston University School of Public Health. Washington had 43 firearm laws and a firearm homicide rate of 2.32 deaths per 100,000 in 2015.

Stronger laws are far from an impenetrable shield. The Texas gunman was able to purchase a military—style rifle and slaughtered 26 people in part because the Air Force failed to enter the man's domestic—violence court—martial into a federal gun background check database.

Fifteen magazines, with capacity for 30 rounds of ammunition each, were found at the scene. No civilian shooting deer or defending his or her home from invaders needs to be able to shoot 450 rounds of ammunition.

Although a national assault weapons ban will expose congressional loyalties to the National Rifle Association, every American deserves protection from angry or mentally disturbed people carrying these weapons with exactly one purpose: to kill others, quickly and efficiently.

Shouldn't our safety be more important than political contributions from the NRA? If lawmakers can't take hard votes to protect the lives of constituents, they shouldn't be serving in Congress or the state Legislature.

See GUN on Next Page

The emergence of two presidents named Donald J. Trump

By ANDREW MALCOLM
SPECIAL TO MCCLATCHY

During the 2016 political campaign, with Hillary Clinton clearly headed for White House victory over her unorthodox GOP opponent, Donald Trump made the bold claim that he could change and become anything he wanted.

"It's very easy being presidential," he proclaimed with the confidence of a billionaire.

The first fifth of the Donald Trump presidency has proven the accuracy of Donald Trump's claim. He can indeed change and become presidential—but only during his foreign trips as United States commander-in-chief and leader of the free world. We're witnessing that other President Trump now during his five-nation, nearly two-week journey around Asia.

At home, it's a different story, different president, different man. His regular early-morning tweet offensives, for instance, provide a hostile resident media the day's easy storyline—who's angered the 71-year-old with what statement on which broadcast network.

Diehard Trump supporters, a group often hovering now slightly below 40 percent, love it. Trump's being the rowdy gunslinger crashing the decorous D.C. party, upsetting all the stuffy elites who've been dismissively ignoring them for years. The more outrageous, the better, even if it's politically counterproductive.

The rest of Americans, a group now approaching six-in-10, do not approve of this Oval Office occupant. It's not like they can do anything about it for three more years. But they frown, even wince, at this president's verbal antics and unabashed arrogance.

They wouldn't really mind a different style of president, someone who's not a programmed political bot. But please just not someone so petty, juvenile and seemingly desperate to get in the last word on even the most insignificant arguments. Did too. Did not.

But wheel a long staircase up to the gaping door of that beautiful blue-and-white Air Force One command center on some foreign airport, and the man who steps out and waves is a different president.

Confident. Kind. Assured. Actually human. In Beijing, the president of the United States delighted China's President Xi Jinping by producing a tablet with a video of 6-year-old granddaughter Arabella Kushner singing a song for him in Mandarin.

At that moment the man who millions still love to hate for soundly shattering their over-confident election expectations was just another proud grandpa. "She's very smart," Trump told China's applauding first couple.

Of course, in reality the real estate magnate is also selling something, in this case support for increased pressure on North Korea's rotund, rogue dictator, Kim Jung Un, to abandon his rapidly developing nuclear weapons program.

Surprisingly in this era of stark political chasms, in that concern foreign traveler Trump has the support of both Democrats (75 percent) and Republicans (74 percent), in rare agreement that the North's weapons program is a major threat to the country, the Pew Research Center found.

As remote as Kim backing down seems now, an American leader must be seen to go to extraordinary lengths to avoid a military confrontation. And Trump, so often portrayed as shooting from the lip, is doing just that.

Trump took the same broader statesmanlike approach in a speech to South Korea's National Assembly. Like his address to dozens of Muslim leaders in Saudi Arabia last spring, it was not apologetic, but both eloquent and refreshingly candid.

"America does not seek conflict or confrontation," the president said, "but we will never run from it. History is filled with discarded regimes that have foolishly tested America's resolve."

Trump urged other nations to pressure Pyongyang. "The time for excuses is over," he said. "Now is the time for strength. If you want peace, you must stand strong at all times. The world cannot tolerate the menace of a rogue regime that threatens with nuclear devastation."

Then, Trump directly addressed "the leader of the North Korean dictatorship. The weapons you are acquiring are not making you safer. They are putting your regime in grave danger.

"North Korea is not the paradise your grandfather envisioned. It is a hell that no person deserves. Yet, despite every crime you have committed against God and man, we will offer a path to a much better future.

"It begins with an end to the aggression of your regime, a stop to your development of ballistic missiles, and complete, verifiable, and total denuclearization."

Notably absent from this 35-minute Trump speech was the bombast, derisive "little Rocket Man" nicknames and threats of unimaginable "fire and fury" raining down on Kim's Pennsylvania-sized country.

But wait! That shouldn't really surprise. This was the President Trump speaking

Andrew Malcolm is an author and veteran national and foreign correspondent covering politics since the 1960s. Follow him @ AHMalcolm.

Estorian tautauta

Guaha `nai in` hiñgog pot "misteriun tres?" Ha tutuhungue` gi as Yuus Tata, Lahiña yan Espiritu Santo. `An matai unu, tinatiye ni dos—tres. Marimatan kampanan Guma` Yuus, tres. Ha`ane: oga`an, taloane yan pupueñge, tres. Sinantusan na familia: San Jose, Santa Maria yan Jesus, tres. Lumala` ta`lu si Jesukristo gi mina` tres dias. Misteriun Tres!

■■■

Geftau i natibu gi haf` suetteña (inana`e `sino "sharing" gi finu` Eñglis). Un` pogse` kutturan tanu` ni sumen ma`ug. Estague` na kustumbre muna fitme mas inagloflì`e gi natibu. Ha soyu` ina`ayuda entalu` todu desde mamunu` ga`ga, peska, che`chu` familia yan komunida. Gaige guine i fitme na haligen yan pisun tautau-ta.

■■■

Dos offisiu sessu anog gi disision i Saina `nai ha ayeg i dose na man-apostolesña: peska yan fangualu`an. Tiha ayeg ginen manriku `sino man-malate` soluke offisiun tanu` yan tasi. Haf` moralidat este na disisioña? Na ti pot hinimidi gi che`chu` i Saina?

Atan lokue` sa` i tanu` yan tasi i pisun mantension prebinsion familia. Ha esgaihon halum hinimiddi gi korasonta piot dispues de todu dia gi papa` somnag, hatdin yan tasi. Ha sede lancheru yan peskadot mamatinas planu haf` para u chogue diariu.

■■■

Tanu` natibu ti tulaikayon estoriaña. Gi hilu este na rekueddun i Saina `nai matutuhun inestablesen familia gi señgsoñg siha. Sumaunau otru siha adelantu kontodu kuttura, linala` tradision gualu`, relihion yan liñguahe.

I inai este na petlas siha `nai man-mafañagu hit. Masustene ni mañainata para i manatatte. Estague` mina` chettun fehman sentimentota gi tanu` `nai man-dañkulu hit gi hechuran guma` familia.

Establesau na lugat-ta. Diariu tafalague kau finagpu` eskuela, cho`chu`, yan otru siha aktibidat. Siña mohon mabenefisia ni man-amko`ta lau magu`ot pot hita ni manatatte. Gaige futtuna-ta gi amtau na sensian niha.

■■■

Oppan kuentos na humalum i atulai gi sagua`. Man-adulalag i tautau para i Chiko man-etupag. Ti huhulat manadan tautau, pisau, kutdet yan haguet gi pantalan.

Guaha ha` lokue` ayu i faye ni mattu sin pisau. Lau ha kikililì` tarun finadeni`. Dispues de umesuette gi todu man-e`etupag, haspog. Ma`pus para iya siha nahuñg kinano`ña kelaguen atulai ni kineni` otru. Faye!

■■■

Antes, gigon mahala i chenchulun atulai mabatsala halum gi inai. Dispues man-mapatte i mangaige na tautau-ta kulan kustumbre gi fina` suette. I tetehnan machule` ya mana` fan mañage i bisinu. Matulaika este na kustumbre. Pa`gu mapunu pesu yan libra de hemunos de kustumbre. Tinilaika!

■■■

Maplanta kafe yan fina` mames para mirienda gi fina` bela antes de lisayun `las dose . Pa`gu, puru neñkanu` regulat manplantau gi lamasa. Gupot!

■■■

Repara sa` lamita gi hutnalerus guine gumagana tagpapa` na sueddu (poverty income level and below). Dichu rason na mauleg ta esgaihon planun man-mananum katsun mantension familia.

Mauleg gi entre semana tafan mananum gi oriyan guma` yan gualu` familia. Ta usune tinanum yan pinegsai. Taya` para u benefisia masahalomta solu hita mismu.

Mas lokue` ha sede hihot na relasion yan kada membron familia. Estague` `nai matanum ni mañaina sensian yine`ase`, ina`ayuda yan gineftau gi entalu` famaguon niha.

■■■

I patgon ni mauleg makreansaña gi gima` mauleg lokue` konduktaña maseha u falag manu. Gaige halige yan pisun kreansa gi halum guma`. Na setbe fitme na guaguat gi famaguon pot futunan niha.

■■■

Sige un` amiguhu kumanta pot finaposña guine siha na petlas iya Pasifiku. Todu bonitu i sunidu ni ha dopbla. Mattu dispues `nai ilegña, "Gaige mandeskansa gi papa` pution yan mapagahes iya paraisu i mañainahu". Na`mahalañg dopbladan palabraña.

Era, apmam na tiempu desde ke ha diñgu Saipan ya sumaga sanlagu mas ke sisienta años. Tihu tuñgu` kau ginacha` i prohimu ume`emahlañg pot klaru na ti u birague` mage dispues de humanau tatte gi familiaña America.

■■■

Hu ega` hagas mubi (movie) pot geran dos giya Burma. Manadan sindalun Japones man-magu`ot kumu presuneru estake siña manhanau tatte Japon.

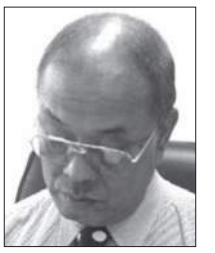
Mientras mananañga batkun niha, sige mañganta "No place like home" gi finu` niha. Estague` na kanta machule` ya matugi`e palabras ni mafana`an "Ti Gi Un` Palasyun Riku" as Tun Josen Pangelinan.

Esta na`mahalañg `nai sige sindalu mañganta gi hilu` totnun minahalañg nui tanu` niha dispues de man-manotisia na mapede Japon gi gera.

■■■

Antes, huli`e tasahos nuebu na pininu` ga`ga ni maha`me pat matala` gi hilu` sin pot presetbasion. Era, hasan guihe na tiempu mangai ice box ya ayu solu manera `nai ti u lastima totchen familia.

`An manalagu, entre matunu, aflitu pat makadun niyog. Esta na`mahalañg `an sige matunu ni mañge` pauña. Ensegidas ha koneyu` tatte gi na`magof na tiempu `nai sessu man-ayudayu` matasahos entre katnen guaka pat babue.



By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the* Saipan Tribune.

GUN

From Page 10

Washington's extreme risk protection order law, approved by voters in 2016, and a similar domestic violence law passed by the Legislature in 2014 will get some teeth in January. That's when a new King County—Seattle team of about a dozen prosecutors, police officers and sheriff's deputies will be activated to follow—up on judges' orders to remove guns from those subject to protection orders. "Where we sometimes fail," King County prosecutor Dan Satterberg says, "is in the follow—through." Three other actions could help make America safer:

■ National adoption of universal background checks for every weapon purchase, including private and gun—show sales. Nearly a quarter of gun purchases nationally are completed without background checks. More than 90 percent of Americans, including 93 percent of people who live in households with guns, agree with background checks for all gun buyers, according to the Pew Research Center.

■ Every government agency, including the military, should recheck its disciplinary databases to make sure everyone convicted of domestic violence or another crime that would bar them from owning a gun under federal law is listed in the federal database for gun—purchase background checks.

■ The nation needs to keep working on better gun technology, including smart guns that only fire after a fingerprint or pass code is entered.

No laws or technology will prevent all gun deaths. But good laws, conscientiously enforced, could save many lives.

(c)2017 *The Seattle Times*

Celebrating Home Care Aide Week

By MARIANAS HEALTH
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Home Care Aide Week takes place from Nov. 12 to Nov. 18, 2017. During this time, we celebrate and commend all home care aides and home health aides around the world and in the CNMI, giving them thanks for their untiring care and compassion for their patients.

What are home care and home health aides?

Home care aides, or personal care aides, are those who provide assistance to individuals who do not necessarily require home healthcare but may need help with household chores and/or personal care.

Home health aides, or (HHAs, according to Merriam-Webster, are specially trained, certified healthcare workers "who provide assistance to a patient in the home." They may be Certified Nursing Assistants. They provide personal care (hygiene and exercise) and perform light household duties (tidying and meal preparation). They are also trained to monitor their patients' conditions. According to Professor Osterman of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Sloan School of Management, "home health aides [are]…trained to spot patients' health problems, to keep track of their pills and doctors' appointments and to offer advice on healthy living."

They are supervised by and work closely with skilled nurses and physical therapists to help deliver the best healthcare possible to their patients. HHAs take vital signs (temperature, pulse, respiration, blood pressure and oxygen saturation). They may help administer certain medications. They are also trained to do muscle strengthening exercises with their patients—and to demonstrate how to do these exercises with patient caregivers. HHAs are trained to assist their patients in hygiene and activities of daily living such as bathing, oral care, hair and nail care, just to name a few. They can also help family and/or caregivers learn safe and proper techniques of bathing their patients and changing bed linens—even for patients who are bedbound and must remain in bed during these procedures. At times, this work can be challenging, but dedicated HHAs embrace these challenges and truly live to serve.

All in all, home care and home health aides help improve their patients' quality of life on a daily basis. If you are blessed to have a home care or home health aide in your life, and you see the positive difference they make, take a few minutes to give them a smile and thank them for all that they do. To learn more about home care and or home health aides, please visit www.marianashealth.com or call 233-4646.

Sources:
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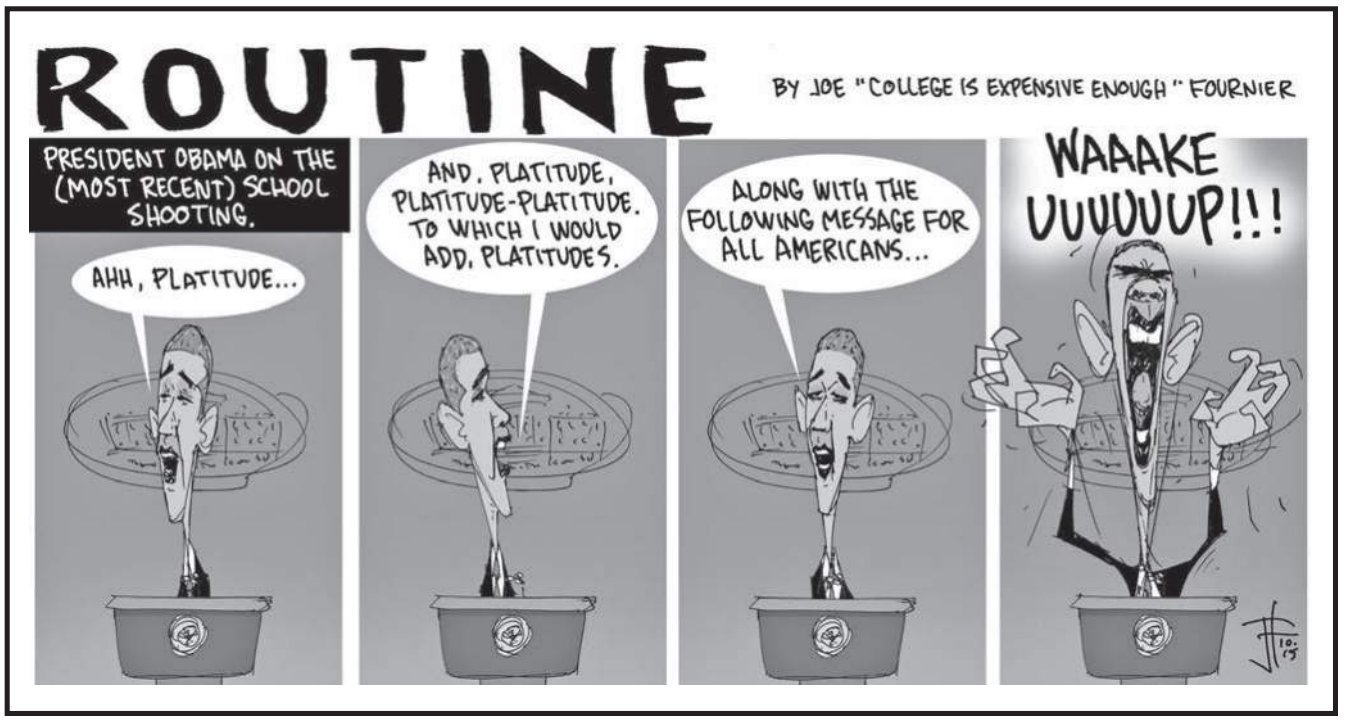
https://www.aarp.org/relationships/caregiving-resource-center/info-08-2010/pc_in-home_care_providers.html
https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/29/business/economy/home-health-care-work.html


ROUTINE
BY JOE "COLLEGE IS EXPENSIVE ENOUGH" FOURNIER
PRESIDENT OBAMA ON THE (MOST RECENT) SCHOOL SHOOTING.
AHH, PLATITUDE...
AND, PLATITUDE, PLATITUDE-PLATITUDE. TO WHICH I WOULD ADD, PLATITUDES.
ALONG WITH THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FOR ALL AMERICANS...
WAAAKE UUUUUUP!!!

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms. East winds 10 to 15 mph.
▲88° ▼78°

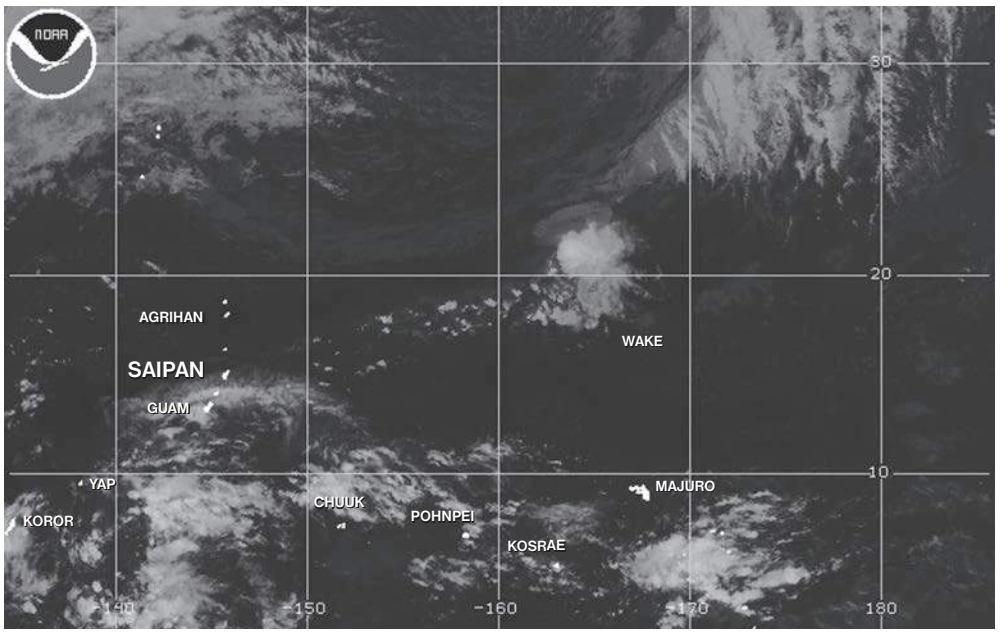
THURSDAY
Partly sunny with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.
▲88° ▼78°

FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼78°

SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼78°

SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼78°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 2:45 AM, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2017
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A weak trade-wind disturbance moving through to the south of Guam is bringing mostly cloudy skies to Guam and Rota this morning. Cloudiness will gradually increase northward with mostly cloudy skies expected for Tinian and Saipan this afternoon. The bulk of the convection with this disturbance is seen to the south of Guam waters, but close enough to justify maintaining a slight risk of thunderstorms for the Marianas for the next couple of days. Drier conditions with moderate trade winds is expected to return to the islands for the end of the week into the weekend.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 77°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	66° / 54°
Beijing	Sunny	48° / 28°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	79° / 73°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	83° / 73°
London	Cloudy	55° / 46°
Los Angeles	Sunny	73° / 58°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	90° / 77°
Melbourne	Rain	64° / 55°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	79° / 71°
New York	Mostly Sunny	50° / 46°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	54° / 41°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	52° / 37°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	55° / 36°
Rome	Cloudy	61° / 46°
Salem	Mostly Sunny	63° / 44°
San Francisco	Rain	58° / 50°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	45° / 34°
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	57° / 43°
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	53° / 43°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
5:36 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.59
11:27 AM	LOW TIDE	0.61
5:30 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.96
-	-	-

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:18 AM	5:44 PM
Thursday	6:19 AM	5:44 PM
Friday	6:19 AM	5:44 PM
Saturday	6:20 AM	5:44 PM
Sunday	6:20 AM	5:43 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	3:23 am	3:41 pm	-
Thursday	4:12 am	4:21 pm	-
Friday	5:02 am	5:02 pm	-
Saturday	5:51 am	5:43 pm	-
Sunday	6:41 am	6:26 pm	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 6, 2017

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:15pm	7:05pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 7
7C3451	4:00am	7:05am	4, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

TW308	2:00am	6:05am	2, 3, 4
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
TW308	2:35am	6:20am	6, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily
LJ652	3:40am	7:30am	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:30am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:00am	10:25am	1
JD396	4:50pm	8:15pm	4

SAIPAN-NANJING (NKG)

XP889	4:45pm	10:30pm	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	10:55am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:55am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6394/191	4:15am	9:00am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	8:10am	7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 3, 4, 6 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6398/193	6:05pm	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	2:00am	5:00am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA6398/159	6:05pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4
7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	3, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
TW307	7:45pm	1:00am+1	1, 2, 3
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
TW307	8:05pm	1:35am+1	5, 6
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
LJ651	9:10pm	2:40am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:10am	3:30pm	4
JD395	10:05pm	5:30am+1	7

NANJING (NKG)-SAIPAN

XP888	9:35pm	4:00am+1	1, 4, 6

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:25pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/6395	12:40am	8:05am	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:30pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/UA6395	10:05pm	8:05am+1	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA192/6395	10:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM
UA184/6395	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:20pm	12:30am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/6395	11:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, LJ Jin Air, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express, XP XTRA Airways; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Marianas Beer & BBQ Festival shows promise

The inaugural Marianas Beer & BBQ Festival on Nov. 4, 2017, shows promise for future growth as the newest signature event of the Marianas Visitors Authority.

Over 300 attendees bought into the full $25 package that included beer and wine servings, samples, and more during the event from 5pm to 11pm at Garapan Fishing Base, with many more in attendance.

"A resounding success!" said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "Our first Marianas Beer & BBQ Festival shows that residents and visitors will patronize this type of event, as shown by the number of people who turned out."

Frankie Hong and Kenny Shih of Taiwan's famous Fourplay Bar debuted exclusive beer cocktails themed after each main island in the Mariana: Saipan Blue, Tinian Red and Rota Green. A highlight of the night were shots created by the bar owners based on personal inspiration provided by each consumer.

Roberta Guerrero, left, and Kanoa Resort general manager Wendi Herring sample the offerings at the Marianas Beer & BBQ Festival on Nov. 4, 2017, at Garapan Fishing Base. MVA

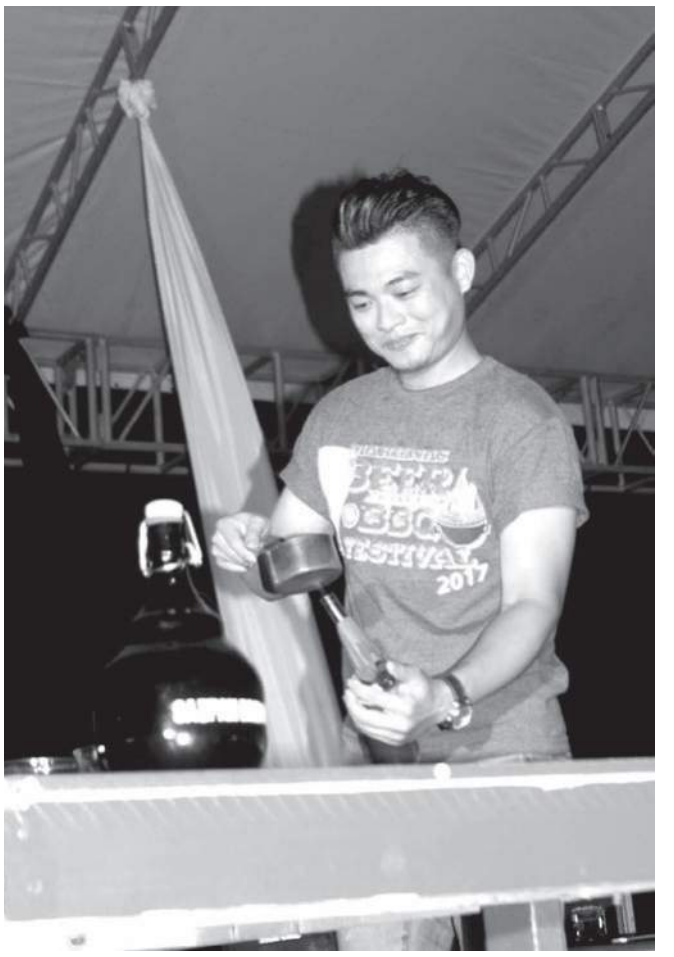
The festival featured Saipan Brewing Co, which the Marianas, as well as six companies distributing craft beers: Pacific Trading Co, MarPac, Franken Brau, Westco, I Love Saipan, and Samcorp Import. Live music by Marvin Guerrero, James Selepeo, Uprooted, Tom Basa and Mango Sessions added flavor to the festival, which paired Marianas brews with island-style barbecue and other appetizers from Holy Smoke, The Hut, I Love Saipan Mannge' BBQ, and Aiko's. Non-alcoholic drinks were also available.

Sponsors included Joeten Ent., Pacific Islands Club Saipan, Imperial Pacific International, and Skywalker Communications.

The Marianas Beer & BBQ Festival will likely return earlier next year. ***(MVA)***

Customers await their chasers offered at the Marianas Beer & BBQ Festival on Nov. 4, 2017, at Garapan Fishing Base. The festival is the newest signature event of the Marianas Visitors Authority. MVA

James Selepeo led the entertainment lineup of Marvin Guerrero, Uprooted, Tom Basa and Mango Session that performed at the Marianas Beer & BBQ Festival on Nov. 4, 2017, at Garapan Fishing Base. MVA



Co-owner Frankie Hong of Fourplay Bar in Taiwan mixes the original Saipan Blue cocktail created for the Marianas Beer & BBQ Festival on Nov. 4, 2017, at Garapan Fishing Base. Hong was joined by co-owner Kenny Shih at the event. MVA

Nine lucky imbibers at the Marianas Beer & BBQ Festival on Nov. 4, 2017, at Garapan Fishing Base get to sample the original cocktail Saipan Blue created by Frankie Hong of Taiwan's Fourplay bar. MVA

Marianas Beer & BBQ Festival mascot Sir Bessa finds new fans at the event on Nov. 4, 2017, at Garapan Fishing Base. MVA

NMI Museum nearly ready to re-open

Much progress has already been made toward renovating the NMI Museum that it is now about ready to re-open to the public.

According to NMI Museum executive director Daniel Aquino, he and his staff have completed resolving over 75 percent of the major problems that plagued the museum prior to his appointment in June.

That included leaks on the roofs that were so severe that it caused flooding within the building, termite buildup, electrical issues, non-functioning air-conditioning units, lack of a storage facility, waterline issues that flooded the museum with sewage, and the overall appearance of the facility. "All have either been completed or are near completion."

When Aquino arrived to the museum over six months ago, the museum was in a deplorable state and there were just two staff members left to maintain it. "Basically nothing was really functioning," he said.

Today, the museum has not only been restored, it has also been fully modernized. During *Saipan Tribune*'s visit earlier this year, the building's walls were stained with mold, the floors were flooded with water caused by leaks in the roof and sewage problems, the artifacts and canvases were rotting away, and the roof was severely damaged.

> **"I owe my staff a debt of gratitude. They are working tirelessly to get the museum opened. We have worked extra hours, extra days and holidays to [sustain the] progress."**
>
> ***— Daniel Aquino, NMI Museum executive director***

According to Aquino, most of the problems were recurring issues that became unmanageable due to low maintenance that resulted from many years of budget cuts. Many of the immediate problems that caused the museum to close down have been resolved, including the many leaks. There has been a complete reconstruction of the roof, new waterlines were installed, an entire bathroom was renovated, the walls were cleaned and painted with more modern colors, and artifacts and canvases were restored and displayed differently.

"These were the problems that we addressed first since they were presenting the greatest challenges affecting the preservation of the exhibits, and the sanitary and health conditions of the staff and visitors," said Aquino.

Another issue that was addressed was the cooling systems. According to Aquino, IT&E generously replaced the museum's former air cooling system.

Aquino credited Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, museum board chair John Oliver Gonzales, and the museum board itself for being very supportive.

"I would like to thank the governor first and foremost for having the confidence in me and appointing me to this position. The governor has been on top of the developments and strides we've made and is very supportive in addressing any immediate needs or concerns that we present to him," said Aquino.

He would also like to thank Gonzales and the museum's board of governors who have been equally as supportive. Aquino said they were surprised, pleased with the transformation of the museum, and the direction the museum is heading. The board was so impressed with how far the museum has gone that it approved the renewal of Aquino's contract, together with an increase in his salary to $50,000 per annum.

He said that board members of the Guam Museum recently visited the NMI Museum and were impressed with its transformation in such a short time.

The restoration of the NMI Museum was not easy, Aquino said, but it is now on the right track to full recovery.

"I am confident that we are in the right path to recovery and a stage where CNMI residents can be proud of their museum. We are confident that the museum will shock and awe people who had visited the museum in the past and see the transformation that has occurred," he said.

Aquino credits much of the museum's progress to the generous support and in-kind contributions of private businesses such as IT&E, Saipan Shipping, Saipan Stevedore, and CMS Trucking.

Also instrumental to the restoration of the NMI Museum was the CNMI Legislature, House Speaker Rafael Demapan, Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation chair Rep. John Paul Sablan, Ways and Means Committee chair Rep. Angel Demapan, and Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Chris Concepcion.

Aquino said there were also many partners who worked behind the scenes to get the museum to where it is now, like Procurement & Supply director Herman Sablan, Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson, the Treasury Office, the Saipan Mayor's Office and his operations crew, and more.

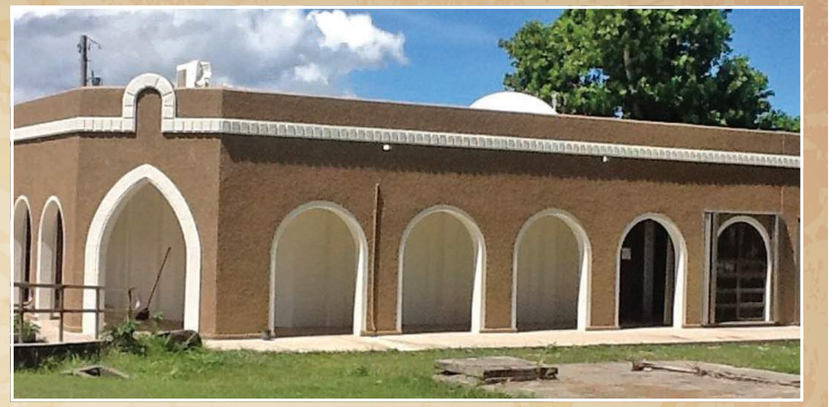
Aquino also acknowledged his staff of four for their hard work, sacrifices, and commitment in getting every task assigned to them completed.

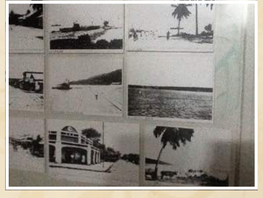
"I owe my staff a debt of gratitude. They are working tirelessly to get the museum opened. We have worked extra hours, extra days and holidays to [sustain the] progress," said Aquino.

He also thanks the public for the patience shown him and the museum's staff.

For individual who are interested to see the major renovations made to the NMI Museum, call 664-2160.

(Kimberly A. Bautista)





Business

Analysis: Senate bill would hike taxes for 13.8 million

WASHINGTON (AP)—Promoted as needed relief for the middle class, the Senate Republican tax overhaul actually would increase taxes for some 13.8 million moderate-income American households, a nonpartisan analysis showed Monday.

The assessment by Congress' Joint Committee on Taxation emerged as the Senate's tax-writing committee began wading through the measure, working toward the first major revamp of the tax system in some 30 years.

Barging into the carefully calibrated work that House and Senate Republicans have done, President Donald Trump called for a steeper tax cut for wealthy Americans and pressed GOP leaders to add a contentious health care change to the already complex mix.

Trump's latest tweet injected a dose of uncertainty into the process as the Republicans try to deliver on his top legislative priority. He commended GOP leaders for getting the tax legislation closer to passage in recent weeks and then said, "Cut top rate to 35% w/ all of the rest going to middle income cuts?"

That puts him at odds with the House legislation that leaves the top rate at 39.6 percent and the Senate bill as written, with the top rate at 38.5 percent.

Trump also said, "Now how about ending the unfair & highly unpopular individual mandate in (Obama)care and reducing taxes even further?"

Overall, the legislation would deeply cut corporate taxes, double the standard deduction used by most Americans, and limit or repeal completely the federal deduction for state and local property, income and sales taxes. It carries high political stakes for Trump and Republican leaders in Congress, who view passage of tax cuts as critical to the GOP preserving its majorities at the polls next year.

With few votes to spare, Republican leaders hope to finalize a tax overhaul by Christmas and send the legislation to Trump for his signature.

The key House leader on the effort, Rep. Kevin Brady, said he's "very confident" that Republicans "do and will have the votes to pass" the measure this week.

Brady, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, said he doesn't expect major changes to the bill as it moves to a final vote in the House. Still, he said Trump's call for removing the requirement to have health insurance as part of the tax agreement "remains under consideration."

Trump and the Republicans have promoted the legislation as a boon to the middle class, bringing tax relief to people with moderate incomes and boosting the economy to create new jobs.

"This bill is not a massive tax cut for the wealthy. ... This is not a big giveaway to corporations," Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, insisted as the panel had its first day of debate on the Senate measure.

Hatch also downplayed the analysis by congressional tax experts showing a tax increase for several million U.S. households under the Senate proposal. Hatch said "a relatively small minority of taxpayers could see a slight increase in their taxes."

The committee's senior Democrat, Sen. Ron Wyden of Oregon, said the legislation has become "a massive handout to multinational corporations and a bonanza for tax cheats and powerful political donors."

The analysis found that the Senate measure would actually increase taxes in 2019 for 13.8 million households earning less than $200,000 a year. That group, about 10 percent of all U.S. taxpayers, would face tax increases of $100 to $500 in 2019. There also would be increases greater than $500 for a number of taxpayers, especially those with incomes between $75,000 and $200,000. By 2025, 21.4 million households would have steeper tax bills.

The analysts previously found a similar magnitude of tax increases under the House bill.

Neither bill includes a repeal of the so-called individual mandate of Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act, the requirement that Americans get health insurance or face a penalty. Several top Republicans have warned that including the provision, as Trump wants, would draw opposition and make passage tougher.

A key moderate Republican in the Senate said it's too early to say whether including repeal of the insurance mandate would cost her vote on the tax bill. "I'm going to see what the Finance Committee winds up with and what we do on the (Senate) floor," said Sen. Susan Collins of Maine.

Collins did say she opposed Trump's idea of reducing the top tax rate for the wealthiest earners.

Among the biggest differences in the two bills that have emerged: the House bill allows homeowners to deduct up to $10,000 in property taxes while the Senate proposal unveiled by GOP leaders last week eliminates the entire deduction. Both versions would eliminate deductions for state and local income taxes and sales taxes.

Walmart shopper hurt while buying melon wins $7.5M verdict

PHENIX CITY, Ala. (AP)—An Alabama man who said he tripped and broke his hip while buying a watermelon at a Walmart store has won a $7.5 million verdict in his lawsuit against the retailer.

Henry Walker on Wednesday was awarded the damages after a jury trial in Phenix City, Alabama, just west of the Georgia state line, court records show.

Walker had sued Arkansas-based Wal-Mart Stores Inc., saying his foot became trapped in a pallet beneath the watermelons as he reached for one of the fruits at a Phenix City Walmart on June 25, 2015.

"We are disappointed in the verdict," Walmart spokesman Randy Hargrove said Thursday. "We appreciate the jury's service, however we believe that the damages awarded were excessive in light of the facts in this case. We plan to appeal."

Walmart should have covered the pallet so that it could not entangle a shopper's foot, Charles Gower, one of Walker's attorneys, told The Columbus Ledger-Enquirer .

In court records and in testimony, Walmart has maintained that the display was not dangerous, and that any negligence was Walker's fault. In fact, the same displays are still used, it said.

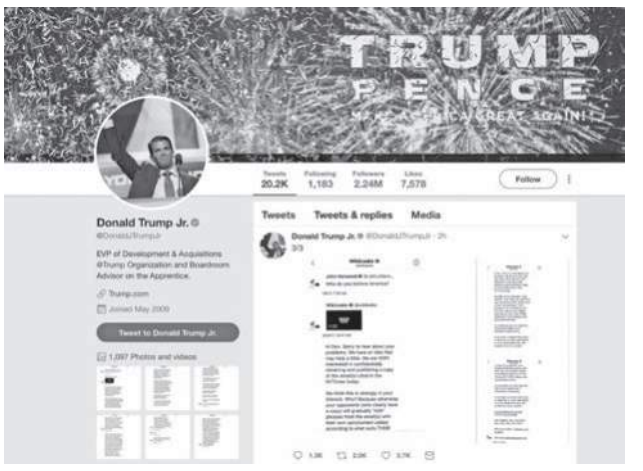
"Walmart continues to display watermelons in the same manner as it did on June 25, 2015," the company in a court filing on Wednesday. "These displays come to the store from the producer already packaged and ready to be dropped and displayed."

Nation

DURING 2016 CAMPAIGN

Trump Jr. messaged with WikiLeaks

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump's oldest son on Monday released a series of private Twitter exchanges between himself and WikiLeaks during and after the 2016 election, including pleas from the website to publicize its leaks.



AP

This image of Donald Trump Jr.'s Twitter account shows a series of direct messages he received from the Twitter account behind the WikiLeaks website, including his responses to the communications, which he posted on Monday, Nov. 13, 2017. The

Donald Trump Jr.'s release of the messages on Twitter came hours after The Atlantic first reported them. In the exchanges—some of them around the time that the website was releasing the stolen emails from Democrat Hillary Clinton's campaign chairman—WikiLeaks praises his father's positive comments about WikiLeaks and asks Trump Jr. to release his father's tax returns to the site.

The revelations are sure to increase calls in Congress to have Trump Jr. testify publicly as part of several committee probes into Russian interference in the 2016 election. And they add a new element to the investigations that have been probing for months whether Trump's campaign colluded in any way with the Russian government.

In an intelligence assessment released last January, the NSA, CIA and FBI concluded that Russian military intelligence provided hacked information from the DNC and "senior Democratic officials" to WikiLeaks. WikiLeaks has denied that Russia was the source of emails it released, including those from Clinton's campaign chairman, John Podesta.

The private messages released by Trump Jr. show him responding to the WikiLeaks account three times, at one point agreeing to "ask around" about a political action committee WikiLeaks had mentioned. He also asked the site about a rumor about an upcoming leak. The messages began in September 2016 and ran through July.

Trump Jr. downplayed the exchanges as he released them.

"Here is the entire chain of messages with @wikileaks (with my whopping 3 responses) which one of the congressional committees has chosen to selectively leak," he tweeted. "How ironic!"

Trump Jr.'s lawyers had released the exchanges to three congressional committees that have been investigating Russian intervention in the 2016 election and whether there were any links to Trump's campaign.

In a statement, Trump Jr.'s lawyer said thousands of documents had been turned over to the committees.

"Putting aside the question as to why or by whom such documents, provided to Congress under promises of confidentiality, have been selectively leaked, we can say with confidence that we have no concerns about these documents and any questions raised about them have been easily answered in the appropriate forum," said Alan Futerfas.

New sex assault allegation hits Moore; he calls it false

WASHINGTON (AP)—A second woman emerged Monday to accuse Roy Moore of sexually assaulting her as a teenager in the late 1970s, this time in a locked car, further roiling the Alabama Republican's candidacy for an open Senate seat. Moore strongly denied it, even as his own party's leaders intensified their efforts to push him out of the race.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell took a remarkably personal swipe at his party's candidate for a Senate seat the GOP cannot afford to lose. "I believe the women," he said, marking an intensified effort by leaders to ditch Moore before a Dec. 12 special election that has swung from an assured GOP victory to one that Democrats could conceivably swipe.

Moore abruptly called a news conference in Gallant, Alabama, after a tearful Beverly Young Nelson's detailed the new allegations to reporters in New York.

"I can tell you without hesitation this is absolutely false. I never did what she said I did. I don't even know the woman," Moore said.

He signaled he has no intention of ending his candidacy, calling the latest charges a "political maneuver" and launching a fundraising appeal to "God-fearing conservatives" to counter his abandonment by Washington Republicans.

In the latest day of jarring events, McConnell, R-Ky., and Moore essentially declared open war on each other. McConnell said the former judge should quit the race over a series of recent allegations of past improper relationships with teenage girls. No, said Moore, the Kentucky senator is the one who should get out.

Cory Gardner of Colorado, who heads the Senate GOP's campaign organization, said not only should Moore step aside but if he should win "the Senate should vote to expel him because he does not meet the ethical and moral requirements of the United States Senate."

Moore, an outspoken Christian conservative and former state Supreme Court judge, fired back at McConnell on Twitter.

"The person who should step aside is @SenateMajLdr Mitch McConnell. He has failed conservatives and must be replaced. #DrainTheSwamp," Moore wrote.

Nelson's news conference came after that exchange and injected a new, sensational accusation in the story.

She said Moore was a regular customer at the restaurant where she worked after school in Gadsden, Alabama.

Asia

ASEAN SUMMIT

N. Korea, Marawi siege, and sea feud top worries

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Southeast Asia started banding its unwieldy cluster of fledgling democracies, monarchies and authoritarian regimes into an EU-like collective half a century ago, but the diverse region of 620 million people remains hampered by conflicts, poverty, human rights crises and other issues.

It has nevertheless evolved into an important arena of discourse, power plays and influence that gathers world leaders in annual summits.

Leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations will mark the 10-nation bloc's 50th anniversary with handshakes, unity photo-ops and pageantry in a gala dinner on Sunday. They'll gather for two days of summitry under tight security in Manila starting Monday and meet world leaders led by President Donald Trump to tackle a slew of security worries.

A list of the most pressing issues:

AP

Leftist protesters burn mock U.S. flags during a rally to protest a visit of U.S. President Donald Trump as well as the 31st ASEAN Summit and Related Summits which opens Monday, Nov. 13, 2017 in Manila, Philippines.

NORTH KOREA

Manila is the last stop on Trump's Asian swing where he's expected to lobby for more punitive action, including diplomatic sanctions, against Pyongyang over its nuclear program. He'll generally find a receptive audience, with the summit's foul-mouthed host, President Rodrigo Duterte, having called North Korea's leader a "crazy son of a bitch" with a "chubby face that looks kind" but who could wipe the region off the map with his "dangerous toys."

China, which wields considerable influence on ASEAN, will, however, be a tempering presence. It has called for dialogue with North Korea and urged the United States to tone down its rhetoric, arguing that sanctions alone cannot solve the impasse.

ASEAN leaders will likely stick to their expression of alarm over Pyongyang's ballistic missile and nuclear tests and press their call for North Korea to return to long-stalled denuclearization talks.

■■■

MUSLIM MILITANTS

The siege by pro-Islamic State group militants that left at least 1,172 combatants and civilians dead and left swaths of the southern Philippine city of Marawi in smoldering rubbles will be on every leader's mind in Manila.

Although Philippine troops have essentially crushed the five-month insurrection, the massive militant attack served as a reality check for governments of the new scale of havoc IS-aligned militants could wreak on urban areas.

Consequently, the main summit venue in a theater complex by Manila Bay has been placed in a security lockdown and declared a no-fly and no-sail zone. Nearly 60,000 police and military personnel will keep watch in Manila and Clark Freeport to the north where some of the leaders will land and senior diplomats are meeting.

Duterte plans to brief leaders on how Filipino forces quelled the siege. ASEAN states and their Asian and Western counterparts find a common interest in addressing the resurgent threat of terrorism and radicalization without much friction.

■■■

ROHINGYA DILEMMA

Alarm over violence in Myanmar's western Rakhine state that has forced more than 600,000 Rohingya Muslims to flee to Bangladesh will likely stay off ASEAN's formal agenda and summit communique. That's because its member states, which include Myanmar, uphold a bedrock policy of non-interference in each other's domestic affairs.

While the policy has held back the regional group from taking a stronger and more relevant stance on such calamities in step with much of the international community, it has allowed ASEAN to endure as a club of nations with disparate backgrounds.

Individually, however, heads of state can raise concern and outrage over the Rohingya crisis during their so-called "retreat," a free-for-all but closed-door session. Malaysia, among others, is expected to push Myanmar to take stronger steps to address the humanitarian problem, which has caused many of the Rohingya to flee to its territory. Malaysia has also pushed the Philippine host to allow a stronger statement on the crisis, causing some tension.

"If it will be discussed, it will be up to Myanmar to raise the issue because this a domestic concern for them," said Robespierre Bolivar, spokesman of Manila's Department of Foreign Affairs.

■■■

SOUTH CHINA SEA

The leaders of China and ASEAN, which includes four member states directly involved in South China Sea territorial disputes, are expected to announce the start of negotiations on a so-called "code of conduct" in the contested waters based on a framework or outline that their foreign ministers endorsed in August.

Both sides would laud such progress, which China acquiesced to after the Philippines under Duterte backed down from being one of Beijing's most virulent U.S.-backed critics. Duterte pursued a policy of rapprochement with Beijing and has not immediately pushed for Chinese compliance with an arbitration ruling by a U.N.-aligned tribunal that invalidated China's expansive claims in the strategic waterway.

"There is more cooperative spirit in managing, in reducing the tensions there," Bolivar said.

ASEAN, however, has been dismissed as an ineffective broker largely because it tends to get paralyzed by indecision due to its consensual decision-making style when many of its member states are either aligned with China or the U.S. The two-page framework took 15 years to conclude and lacked key provisions, including a dispute-settlement mechanism, that China opposes.

World

Hezbollah at the center of Lebanon's current crisis

BEIRUT (AP)—The Lebanese militant group Hezbollah is at the center of the recent crisis that has gripped Lebanon and rattled a region already rife with conflict.

When Saudi-backed Prime Minister Saad Hariri declared his resignation in a surprise announcement from the Saudi capital, Riyadh, he blamed Hezbollah for imposing itself on the country and doing the bidding of its main backer, Iran, in Lebanon and elsewhere in the region.

The one-time local Shiite guerrilla army that rallied Lebanon's Shiites and battled Israel — even earning admiration from the region's Sunnis— has turned into a powerful, well-armed group caught up in the Iran-Saudi rivalry that is shaping the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia singled Hezbollah out, accusing it of declaring war on the kingdom, just as the U.S. ratcheted up its pressure on Iran and imposed new sanctions on Hezbollah, which it considers a terrorist group.

Here is a look at the 35-year old militant group, its sources of power and regional role.

BEGINNINGS and LEADERS

Hezbollah was formed by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard in 1982 to fight Israel's invasion of Beirut. Under the leadership of Hassan Nasrallah, who took over in 1992 after his predecessor, Abbas Mussawi, was killed in an Israeli airstrike, the group moved from seeking to implement an Iranian-style Islamic republic in Lebanon to focusing on fighting Israel and integration into Lebanon's sectarian-based politics. Nasrallah, now 57, has played a key role in ending a feud among Shiites, focusing attention toward fighting Israel and later expanding the group's regional reach.

WARS WITH ISRAEL

Hezbollah became the main militant group opposing Israel and the buffer zone it established in southern Lebanon in 1985. In 1996, Israel launched an offensive to end the guerrilla attacks, striking Lebanese power stations and killing more than 100 Lebanese civilians sheltering in a U.N. base. A year later, 12 Israeli soldiers were killed in a commando raid in the south.

Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon in 2000 was hailed as a victory for Hezbollah. In the same year, Hezbollah captured three Israeli soldiers and a businessman in cross border raids, and later negotiated a swap in 2004, releasing hundreds of prisoners and fighters.

Then in 2006, Hezbollah captured two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid, sparking a 34-day war that killed 159 Israelis and more than 1,000 Lebanese.

A U.N.-brokered cease-fire brought thousands of international peacekeeping troops to police the Israeli-Lebanese border.

HEZBOLLAH AT HOME

Hezbollah's popularity at home didn't only stem from its opposition to Israel. With a weak Lebanese state, the Iranian-sponsored group, like most other sects, provided a vast array of social services for its supporters, through education, health and social networks. But as the militant group sought more executive and legislative powers following Israel's 2000 withdrawal, it worked to funnel some of its support through state institutions to reach the broader public.

Another turning point came in 2008, when heavily armed Hezbollah fighters seized control of vast parts of Beirut, flexing its power domestically for the first time. The show of force followed attempts by Lebanon's Western-backed government to curb the militants' influence by dismantling its telecommunication network.

Hezbollah has been the most powerful player in Lebanon's politics ever since. Saudi Arabia and Iran, which backed opposite sides inside Lebanon, ended a two-year deadlock over electing a president by tacitly approving a power-sharing deal that effectively enshrined Hezbollah's new powerful role. With that, Hariri, a Sunni, headed a unity government and Michel Aoun, a Hezbollah ally, became president.

REGIONAL FOOTPRINT

Hezbollah sent its gunmen to fight alongside the forces of Syrian President Bashar Assad in 2012, providing a significant boost to the overstretched military, and turning the tide of the war. It was also crucial to safeguarding the Shiite militant group's access to Syria, the land corridor through which it is believed to get its weapons from Iran.

Citing estimates based on diplomatic reports and open-source data, Thanassis Cambanis, a fellow at the Century Foundation, said some 20,000 to 30,000 armed men, including 4,000 core fighters as well as local militiamen and tribesmen are under Hezbollah's command in the fighting in Syria and Lebanon.

WORLD BRIEFS

Rescuers dig through debris after Iran-Iraq border quake

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Rescuers are digging through the debris of buildings felled by an earthquake that killed more than 430 people in the border region of Iran and Iraq. The work is taking place two days after a magnitude-7.3 earthquake struck Sunday night Iran time, just as people were going to bed. The worst damage appeared to be in the Kurdish town of Sarpol-e-Zahab in the western Iranian province of Kermanshah, which sits in the Zagros Mountains that divide the two countries. Residents fled without time to grab their possessions as apartment complexes collapsed into rubble. Outside walls of some buildings were sheared off, power and water lines were severed, and telephone service was disrupted. Residents on Monday dug frantically through wrecked buildings for survivors.

EU bans arms sales to Venezuela, takes aim at officials

BRUSSELS (AP)—The European Union on Monday banned arms sales to Venezuela and set up a system to slap asset freezes and travel restrictions on Venezuelan officials as it sought to ramp up pressure on President Nicolas Maduro. The move was decided by EU foreign ministers at talks in Brussels. The weapons ban would stop sales of military equipment that could be used for repression or surveillance of Venezuelans. "These measures will be used in a gradual and flexible manner and can be expanded, by targeting those involved in the non-respect of democratic principles or the rule of law and the violation of human rights," the ministers said in a statement. They said the sanctions could be reversed depending on how Maduro reacts to the demands for more democracy in the South American nation and the release of political prisoners.

Focus

Ex-members say church uses power, lies to keep grip on kids

By MITCH WEISS and HOLBROOK MOHR
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SPINDALE, North Carolina (AP)—As a court-appointed advocate for two foster boys, it was Nancy Burnette's job to ensure they were in good hands. So as part of her casework, she visited Word of Faith Fellowship, the evangelical church they attended with the couple seeking to adopt them.

What happened next haunts her: In the middle of the service, the chanting and singing suddenly stopped, Burnette said, and the fiery pastor pointed at Burnette, accusing her of being "wicked." ''You are here to cause strife!" she recalled Jane Whaley shouting, as she sensed congregants begin to converge upon her. "You don't think these kids are supposed to be here!"

Terrified, Burnette left, but not before promising the boys, ages 4 and almost 2, that she would return—a promise she ultimately could not keep.

"What I didn't know was how hard Word of Faith would fight—and the tactics they would use—to keep the kids," Burnette told The Associated Press.

That was not the only time Word of Faith Fellowship's leaders and members have used positions of authority, intimidation or deception to bring children into the church's folds or keep them from leaving - often at Whaley's behest, according to dozens of interviews and hundreds of pages of court records, police reports and social services documents obtained by the AP.

As a result, children have been introduced to sometimes violent church practices that run counter to the North Carolina laws designed to protect them, the AP found.

The state promotes "family preservation," designed to prevent the "unnecessary placement of children away from their families." But the AP found that some young congregants have been separated from their parents for up to a decade—bounced from family to family—as leaders strive to keep them in the church.

In addition, three single mothers told the AP that a longtime Word of Faith Fellowship member who was a county court clerk bypassed the foster system and eventually won permanent custody of their children, even though a judge called the clerk's conduct inappropriate. Two of the mothers said the clerk approached them and offered to temporarily keep the children while they served their jail time.

TNS
Nancy Burnette talks about her experience as a child advocate during an interview in Spindale, N.C., on Sept. 27, 2017.

The AP interviewed a dozen former congregants who said they had personally witnessed the three children living with the clerk being subjected to intense screaming sessions called "blasting" aimed at casting out demons, or being held down, shaken or beaten.

Even as she battled desperately for her young son, one of the three women had told a judge that, if she could not have him, the boy would be better off in foster care due to the church's abusive nature.

A lawyer for Whaley, Noell Tin, disputed the AP's conclusions.

"The notion that church members separate children from their parents at Ms. Whaley's urging is preposterous," he said. "The idea that a thriving and diverse church like the Word of Faith Fellowship functions in this manner is an insult to its members."

Under Whaley's leadership, Word of Faith Fellowship has grown to about 750 congregants in North Carolina and a total of nearly 2,000 members in its churches in Brazil and Ghana and through affiliations in Sweden, Scotland and other countries.

As part of an ongoing investigation into the church, the AP already has cited dozens of former members as saying congregants were regularly punched and choked in an effort to "purify" sinners. Victims of the violence included pre-teens and toddlers, they said - even crying babies, who were vigorously shaken and sometimes smacked to banish devils.

Now, the AP has uncovered numerous instances in which Word of Faith leaders turned children against their parents, with the children then taken in or adopted by other church families. Ex-members told the AP of at least two dozen such cases, which they attributed to the church trying to keep minors from leaving the congregation.

One former congregant, for example, said Whaley pressured her into lying about her sister being abusive when the woman wanted to depart with her four children, leading to a protracted custody battle that resulted in the kids living with a prominent minister.

Another former follower told the AP he was separated from his biological family as a teenager and locked up for months until he began referring to another church couple as "mom and dad."

In every case, children's lives were under the total control of Whaley and the leaders enforcing her rules. They were educated in the church school and largely isolated from the outside world, and prohibited from watching television or celebrating their birthdays or Christmas. Any violations could be met with physical or verbal punishment.

The church has a song: "Happy, happy, happy, happy are the children whose God is the Lord." It serves as a cue for young congregants to put on a happy face, no matter how they're feeling.

"One thing that is confusing for people in the community is how these children can be so well-behaved and so well-dressed if things are so bad," said John Huddle, whose relationship with his kids was severed when he broke with the church. "But the clothing can cover the bruises and the smiles can hide the hurt."

POWER AND INFLUENCE

Pregnant and facing a jail sentence, Keela Blanton said she thought her prayers had been answered when a friendly court clerk offered to care for the child until she was back on her feet.

Blanton was facing about eight months behind bars for various charges, including attempting to obtain controlled substances by fraud, when Laura Bridges—a Word of Faith member who was then a Rutherford County clerk—approached her, she said. Afraid her son would end up in permanent state care, she agreed.

In July 2008, when the boy was 5 days old, Blanton signed an agreement granting Bridges temporary guardianship until her release from jail, when she would resume "full responsibility for my child," according to a document obtained by the AP.

When she got out two months later, Blanton said Bridges and her husband told her that they now loved the boy and wanted to help care for him. He spent much of his time with the couple, which Blanton said seemed like a blessing until he began seeming anxious and came home with bruises on his face.

In August 2012, Blanton refused to send the boy back to the Bridges and filed child abuse reports with the sheriff's office and social services authorities.

A clinical assessment conducted by a counselor Blanton hired said the then 4-year-old boy showed "signs of being coerced and brainwashed." He "became hysterical" about missing church services and seemed afraid of being "dealt with" if he broke church rules, the report said.

The counselor noted that the boy wet his pants twice during the interview, and said Laura Bridges had instructed him to soil himself during visits with Blanton.

Videos of the boy obtained by the AP show him overwrought over seemingly minor things. "They don't wear blue jeans!" he sobbed in one video, apparently afraid to return to the Bridges in clothes forbidden by the church.

"I felt my son was being brainwashed," Blanton told a judge during an emergency custody hearing, according to a recording of the proceedings.

A social worker testified that Blanton was a fit mother with a tidy, "safe" home and noted that she had custody of her other children—two older boys and a younger daughter. But the Bridges described Blanton as a criminal who lived with a drug dealer in a filthy house and rarely asked to see the boy.

The judge awarded the Bridges primary custody, saying Blanton had allowed her son to largely live with the couple for four years and that it would be traumatic to remove him. But he also told the couple's attorney, "You haven't shown me here that she is not a fit and proper person to at least have some relationship with this child."

Blanton said she would rather the child be in foster care than with the Bridges, but the judge said he had no grounds to place him in the state's hands.

Throughout the court battle, Blanton said members of the church followed her and took pictures of her family, and that the pressure finally pushed her over the edge. In October 2012, she attempted suicide and was admitted for psychiatric care for several days, according to court records.

In February 2014, another judge gave sole custody to the Bridges, citing Blanton's "prolonged failure to request, establish and exercise regular contact with the child." He also noted that she had no stable employment, continued to break the law with offenses such as driving with a suspended license, and moved 19 times over the course of five years.

Blanton said the Bridges lied about how frequently she visited the boy and often prevented her from seeing him. She now has not seen her son in five years and sobbed when she told him via the AP, "Momma didn't walk away. I love you with all my heart - everything that's in me."

In a statement to the AP, Bridges said she met Blanton at the clerk's office but then developed a friendship with her. She took the boy in at Blanton's request, she wrote, adding, "She was in a difficult time and I wanted to help."

In awarding full custody to the Bridges, however, the judge noted that Bridges "while working in the court of clerk's office, communicated with Ms. Blanton her willingness to help with the unborn child while Blanton was in the courtroom awaiting transfer" to jail. "The court does not condone nor deem appropriate such contact by court officials under such circumstances," he wrote.

It wasn't the first time Bridges used her position to procure a child from a troubled woman, another young mother told the AP.

The woman said she was facing drug charges in 2005 when Bridges approached her and offered to care for her daughter, who was not yet a year old. When the woman's three children were taken away after what she blamed on a failed drug test, the Bridges kept the youngest. The woman—who asked that her name not be used because she feared losing access to her daughter for speaking out—even was ordered to pay child support to the couple, court records show.

And a third young woman with a drug problem and a warrant for her arrest said Bridges called her "out of nowhere" in 2008, identified herself as court employee and offered to take her child when he was born.

Denikka Simpson said in written messages to the AP that she was then in no position to care for the child, but felt manipulated into signing adoption paperwork.

"I was told I could get him back," said Simpson, who has a history of drug-related charges and other offenses. But when she asked for the boy, she said the Bridges refused, telling her that he would get in touch with her someday if he chose to do so. She has not seen him since he was 6 weeks old, she said.

Bridges also denied approaching the other two women and said they, too, came to her seeking help caring for their children.

"We only became parents to these children after a number of independent persons charged with safeguarding child welfare determined that they should be with us," she wrote.

She also insisted the children had never been mistreated, writing, "Anyone who says otherwise is not being truthful."

Benjamin Cooper, one of the ex-members who told the AP they witnessed the children living with the Bridges

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EX-MEMBERS

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being abused, said the three women might not have been ideal mothers but that their kids would have been better off in the foster-care system.

"Maybe these weren't great parents, but that doesn't mean the kids should have ended up in the church, where abuse is pervasive," said Cooper, who left the congregation in 2014. "The church is the last place they should have ended up."

MONEY AND INFLUENCE

For years, Word of Faith Fellowship has used its muscle—attorneys, money and influence—in custody, foster-care and other cases involving children, the AP found.

Even if it meant lying, former members said, ministry leaders have regularly attacked parents who launched custody battles for their kids when they broke with the church, staunchly taking the side of the remaining parent.

Ex-follower Natasha Cherubino witnessed that firsthand when her family was involved in a bitter custody fight in 2000.

A judge awarded joint custody of Cherubino's three young stepsiblings to their divorcing parents, Ben and Pamela McGee, despite noting in his ruling that Word of Faith had tried to exercise "complete control" over the children and that he believed the church's practices hurt kids. The judge said the children could not be paddled or blasted—restrictions that Cherubino and other former followers said church leaders flouted.

Cherubino said the leaders coerced the children into throwing fits before weekend visits with their father, who had broken with the church. "And when the children returned, they were "interrogated about what they did at their father's house," she said.

Finally, worried about the stress the situation was exerting on his kids after nearly six years of battling for custody, Ben McGee gave up, Cherubino said. "He just couldn't take what the church was doing to his children—and to him," she said.

Shana Muse also learned the price of trying to extract children from the church. She became mired in a nasty custody battle with sect leaders when she tried to exit in 2002 with her four children, ranging in age from 8 to 15.

"If you're thinking about leaving, be prepared," she said. "They will do everything to personally discredit you and show judges and the public the kids are better off with a church family."

Muse was persuaded to join Word of Faith by her two sisters, who said their church could help her: She had a drug problem and was facing legal problems in Florida for writing bad checks.

After moving to Spindale, Muse worked for a business owned by Kent Covington, an influential church minister. But she said she reached a breaking point when she saw her children and others being screamed at and beaten in the name of God.

After telling Covington she planned to return to Florida with the children, she arrived home from work that September 2002 night to find her house empty, Muse said. She promptly called the Rutherford County sheriff's office to report that the kids had been kidnapped.

When deputies arrived, they spoke to church leaders. And much to Muse's shock, she said, her sister Suzanne Cooper lied to deputies. "She said I had been abusing my children and that they actually had custody of my children," Muse said.

Suzanne Cooper, who left the church in 2014, told the AP that she was pressured by Whaley and other ministers to lie, adding tearfully, "I live with that guilt every day."

Through her attorney, Whaley denied ever pressing anyone to lie.

Instead of allowing Muse to take her kids, the sheriff's office alerted the social services department. Muse said Covington and his wife, Brooke, agreed to her request that the children stay with them until the situation could be resolved. She was granted permission to take the kids after a few days, but they already had been turned against her and threw "a major fit" to stay, she said.

Muse said she then made a decision that torments her still: Because she felt she had no other option, she asked the Covingtons if her children could remain with them for a month or two while she straightened out her life. The couple agreed, but had Muse sign what she said she thought was a temporary custody agreement.

"I did not read the document closely. I trusted them," she said, adding that she also was intimidated in a room filled with Word of Faith leaders. The document said Muse "gives and conveys all my rights and custody and control" to the Covingtons.

Muse said she returned to Spindale in December 2002 after a stint at a clinic specializing in "cult-deprogramming," but that the Covingtons refused to hand over her children. So she called social services and said the children—and others inside Word of Faith—were being abused, triggering both an investigation into the church and a legal battle for her kids.

During custody hearings in 2003, church members—including Suzanne Cooper and another sister—painted Muse as an abusive mother. Muse, in turn, detailed how children were mistreated inside the church.

TNS

As a court-appointed advocate for two foster boys, Nancy Burnette visited the Word of Faith Fellowship, the evangelical church they attended with the couple seeking to adopt them. Arriving in the middle of a service, the chanting and singing suddenly stopped, Burnette said, and the fiery pastor pointed at Burnette, accusing her of being "wicked." "You are here to cause strife!" she recalled Jane Whaley shouting. "You don't think these kids are supposed to be here!"

After the testimony concluded, Judge Randy Pool said he found "clear and convincing evidence the children were abused and neglected by isolation, excessive corporal punishment and blasting while at WOFF church" and they were placed in foster care. But the case was not over.

The Covingtons and the church spent thousands of dollars helping Muse's two teenage girls successfully file for emancipation, which enabled them to quickly move back into the couple's house. And the boys also left a foster home and moved back after Pool's ruling was overturned by an appeals court over a jurisdictional issue.

The Covingtons did not respond to a request for comment left at Kent Covington's business.

Three of Muse's four children have since left the church, and they told the AP that they were physically and verbally abused by the Covingtons and other ministers.

"I can't tell you how many times I was beaten, how many times I had black eyes or was so physically hurt I couldn't move," Patrick Covington said.

They also said they were coerced by Whaley into lying about their mother. "We were told to tell social workers that she beat us," daughter Rachael Bryant said.

Sitting in the living room of her Charlotte home, Bryant held her mother's hand as she apologized. "What we did was wrong," she said.

Muse clutched her daughter's fingers as she spoke words of forgiveness. And she fought tears as she expressed her fears for the son remaining in the church.

"I'm speaking out for him and all the others," she said. "Something has to be done."

THE FOSTER CHILDREN

When Donna Whitworth showed up for a medical appointment in 2011, she recalls the nurse practitioner commenting on how healthy the foster children who accompanied her looked. Within weeks, Whitworth said, she got a call from a social worker informing her that a potential family had been found for two of the kids.

The nurse? Anne Brock, a longtime Word of Faith member. The family? Church members Werner and Hetty Trachsel. The children? The two boys that Cleveland County court advocate Nancy Burnette ultimately could not honor her promise to.

The Trachsels had been in the process of becoming foster parents but, instead of applying locally, they went to the neighboring county where church member Lori Cornelius was a social worker, according to documents obtained by AP.

Under North Carolina law, social workers must give foster parents adequate notice before removing a child from a foster home "to prepare the child and to prepare themselves for a significant event in their lives." But despite a few overnight visits with the Trachsels, Whitworth said everything seemed rushed.

She got a call one day from social services telling her to meet the couple in a grocery store parking lot to hand over the kids, Whitworth said. No social worker was present, she said, and the Trachsels left little time for goodbyes.

"I sat in that parking lot for over an hour and cried. I knew in my gut something wasn't right," Whitworth said.

Burnette recalled many red flags: She said the Trachsels were not yet officially certified as foster parents when the boys were allowed to move in. The kids were not receiving the proper therapy and regressed emotionally. And the couple gave conflicting accounts of how they would raise the boys.

After her intimidating experience at the church service, Burnette said she and her supervisor decided to remove the boys from the Trachsel home. Instead, Burnette said, she was taken off their case.

In a conversation surreptitiously recorded by a former church member and obtained by the AP, Whaley said she had called Burnette's supervisor to complain about her, noting that the supervisor "was as precious as can be ... she threw her totally off the case."

Eight former members said they had seen the two boys being blasted or mistreated by church members. Asked by the AP if the boys had ever been abused, Werner Traschel responded, "Never. Never, never, never." He said he had been certified as a foster parent when the boys moved in and called them "the most happy children."

Burnette's former supervisor, Dawn Stover, declined comment, citing confidentiality laws governing foster children.

An attorney for the Cleveland County social services department responded to questions sent to director Karen Pritchard by saying state law prohibited the agency from discussing individual cases.

For church member Tim Cornelius, obtaining a foster child also was a snap. He, too, went to neighboring Cleveland County, where his sister-in-law Lori was a social worker, and said she gave him advice on how to "game the system."

Cornelius and his wife became foster parents to a 6-month-old boy. Under North Carolina regulations, foster parents are mandated to provide a child with safe home, but Cornelius said he saw his son abused by others—blasted, and violently shaken—and knew it would only get worse.

"I knew he was going to get older and they were going to beat him up. So I started trying to step up,'" Cornelius said.

For pushing back, he said, he was berated and beaten himself. Fed up, he left both his wife and Word of Faith in 2013 after 20 years in the church.

After guilt set in, Cornelius said he told a social worker that he was scared for the boy's safety due to the church's violent practices. A week later, he said, he was contacted by a social services attorney who thanked him for being candid. But he said he never heard from the attorney again, and the boy remained with his ex-wife.

"In retrospect, I regret I didn't do more to protect him. But at the time, I was afraid. I believed that if you defied Jane, you would become a target and you would go to hell," Cornelius said. "It still haunts me."

Lori Cornelius left her social services position earlier this year after the AP quoted former church members who said she participated in coaching sessions designed to circumvent investigators looking into abuse allegations.

She denied that she helped her brother-in-law obtain a foster child and told the AP that she had never witnessed any abuse at Word of Faith. "Never would allow a child to be abused or be anywhere where a child was being abused," she said.

A LIFELONG TOLL

When he was 13, Brent Johnston said, Jane Whaley ripped his family apart: She decreed that he should be taken from his mother and live instead with Bill and Jennifer Creason, a church couple with no children of their own.

Johnston grew up in Word of Faith. Over the years, his mother had struggled with personal problems and the church's strict ways, breaking with the sect at times, only to return when she ran out of options.

After Johnston and his younger brother went to live with the Creasons in 2008, his mother left the church for good and Whaley told him she had "turned my mom over to Satan," he recalled.

Jennifer Creason had been Johnston's principal at the church's K-12 school and he was terrified at the prospect of living with the couple, who he described as both emotionally and physically abusive.

In 2011, Johnston said, he was accused of "unclean" thoughts and locked up for more than five months in the Lower Building, a cramped, four-room structure reserved for those deemed the worst sinners.

If he wanted out, he said, Whaley insisted he start calling the Creasons "mom and dad."

"Basically, we were their way to have a family, but taking someone else's kids away is not the right way to do it," he said.

The Creasons did not respond to the AP's request for comment.

Johnston said Whaley called a meeting of top ministers and lawyers in which he was pressured to tell his mother he wanted to stay with the Creasons.

His younger brother said he wanted to be adopted by the couple, Johnston recalled. Under intense pressure, he said his mother—who declined to be interviewed—"was basically forced to sign over her rights" to the boy. Court documents show the Creasons filed paperwork to adopt Johnston's brother on May 29, 2012.

Johnston was told to change his last name to Creason, which he did, in a process finalized in July 2015. But after leaving the church early the next year, he informally started using Johnston again.

Johnston hasn't had a relationship with his brother since fleeing Word of Faith. Sometimes, he drives by the Creasons' house, hoping to catch a glimpse of his sibling. But he doesn't dare linger.

"The last time I saw him, he was playing basketball outside," Johnston said.

He allowed himself a fleeting hope that someday, somehow, they would be a family again. Then he drove away.

Life & Style

In 'Justice League,' DC looks beyond Batman and Superman

NEW YORK (AP)—Peace never reigns in the pages of DC Comics. There's always a world to be saving, a cataclysm to avert. The making of the DC superhero team-up film "Justice League" was hardly any more tranquil.

Made in the wake of the disappointment surrounding its predecessor, "Batman v Superman," and the critically-panned "Suicide Squad," ''Justice League" was, like a jetliner given new wings in midair, retooled on the fly. Warner Bros. sought to lighten the tone of Zack Snyder's grandiose and muscle-bound DC universe—a much-publicized pivot that came just as tragedy was striking.

This Nov. 3, 2017 file photo shows "Justice League" cast members Jason Momoa, from left, Ezra Miller, Gal Gadot, Ben Affleck, Ray Fisher and Henry Cavill at a photo call for the film in London. The film opens on Friday. AP

Snyder, the "300" filmmaker, had overseen this latest series of DC movies starting with "Man of Steel," but he stepped down after "Justice League" had been shot following the death of his daughter. Joss Whedon, the "Avengers" director known for snappy dialogue who had already been helping to punch up the script, was brought in steer the film through post-production and two months of reshoots. (He's credited as co-writer.) Writer Geoff Johns and producer Jon Berg had already been brought in to brighten "Justice League" and overhaul the wider DC slate with a more optimistic tone.

But that's not been all. Ben Affleck, who stars as Batman, withdrew from directing a stand-alone Batman film, while also combating criticism over his behavior with women in the past. Whedon, himself, was called a hypocrite for espousing feminist ideals by his ex-wife, Kai Cole. Jason Momoa had to apologize for a 2011 joke about rape and "Game of Thrones." And just weeks before release, Warner Bros. severed ties with one of the film's chief financiers, Brett Ratner's RatPac-Dune company, after sexual assault allegations were leveled against Ratner. Gal Gadot, who plays Wonder Woman, has reportedly insisted Ratner have no connection with any future Wonder Woman film.

"Justice League" is the kind of production that, one suspects, its makers will celebrate the release of with a stiff drink.

"I've probably had a stiff drink along the way," producer Charles Roven says, chuckling. "It's been different in the sense that we've had some sadness along the happy-joy of making the movie. But for the most part it's been an incredibly positive experience."

Now, Warner Bros. and DC are hoping that the finished "Justice League," which opens Friday, doesn't show any Frankenstein-like scars from its tumultuous creation.

"The goal is to make sure when you're watching the movie, it all feels cohesive," says Roven, the veteran producer of "The Dark Knight" trilogy. "That imprint that Joss had, some aspect of it is going to come out in the direction, but the actors are already pretty much down the road on their arcs. Let's just say 80, 85 percent of the movie is what was originally shot. There's only so much you can do with other 15, 20 percent of the movie."

In interviews, Roven and cast members pledged their loyalty to Snyder and his vision for the franchise, one they say incorporated a changing tone before Whedon's involvement. (Neither filmmaker was made available for interview. Each has stayed silent publicly since Snyder's departure.)

"Zack from the time that I first met with him said, 'Look, Batman makes the DC world dark. The DC world has to be created as something dark,'" says Ezra Miller, who plays Barry Allen aka the Flash). "He said what's great now is that the League gets to bring Batman out of this darkness. That was always Zack's vision. That was the intention from the beginning."

The film, Miller says, has "a wonderful collision of tone" that he considers "a testament to both the strength of Zack's vision and the generosity of Joss's commitment."

It's also a turning point in the larger DC cinematic world. "Justice League" finds Affleck's Bruce Wayne, in the wake of Superman's apparent death, gathering together the League to fight a new enemy. That means pushing not just Wonder Woman to the fore, but also Miller's Flash, Momoa's Aquaman and Ray Fisher's Cyborg.

"It was very clear that the tone of the movie was different than 'Batman v Superman,'" says Gadot. "Henry (Cavill), Ben and I had a wonderful addition with Ezra and Jason and Ray (that) just stirred everything up."

Gadot and "Wonder Woman" are a big reason for optimism in the franchise, following its critically acclaimed, zeitgeist-grabbing $412.6 million box office success domestically. Though the epicenter of DC Comcs has always revolved around Batman and Superman, that's starting to change.

Matt Reeves has taken over the Batman movie, but he's starting fresh on the screenplay, making a release date several years off. That leaves open the possibility of further changes, even potentially Affleck's casting. "From everything I know, he's going to play that Batman," said Roven. "They're retooling the script, so I can't really say anything for certain."

The Superman sequel "Man of Steel 2" also isn't coming anytime soon, if at all. Roven says there's no script but "various story ideas" are being kicked around.

On the front burner, however, is "Aquaman," scheduled for release in December 2018, a Wonder Woman sequel due in 2019 (with director Patty Jenkins returning) and a Cyborg movie. Whedon is also prepping a Batgirl movie.

Q&A: A quick word with Ezra Miller on becoming the Flash

NEW YORK (AP)—Ezra Miller brings an electric energy to the superhero team-up film "Justice League," pinballing off the more imposing presences of Henry Cavill, Gal Gadot and Ben Affleck.

They are mighty. He is fast.

Miller was first cast as Barry Allen, a.k.a. The Flash, several years ago, but "Justice League" is his most front-and-center performance yet as the fastest man alive. He's also the best thing in the film, adding a hyper, insecure liveliness that has often been lacking from many recent, more grandiose DC Comics films.

As played by the 25-year-old, Barry is a motor-mouthed loner who, when asked by Bruce Wayne to join the League, is mostly happy to just have some friends.

Miller, who has been credited as the first out LGBT person to play a lead role in a major superhero film, has distinguished himself by playing hyper-verbal outcasts in movies big ("Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them") and small ("We Need to Talk About Kevin," ''The Perks of Being a Wallflower"). Speaking by phone from London, Miller spoke with verbal gymnastics that even the Flash might struggle to keep up with.

AP: From "City Island" to "Fantastic Beasts" you seem to be drawn to playing outsiders.

Miller: I'm definitely interested in what I would call Barbara McClintock's discovery of the rebellious gene. Things advance by mutating away from their point of origin. I do think that happens on not just a cellular or genetic level but within civil society. A lot of the people who have shaped ideas and science on planet Earth have been outsiders. I feel often like an outside. It's a fascinating type of person to portray. And I think ultimately everyone has an element of that in their experience even if their life doesn't fully present that on first look. I think everyone can feel alienated and can both benefit by that and know the harm of that.

AP: You seem a quick-witted person. Do you identify with the Flash?

Miller: A cool idea about the Flash is that he, as he starts to move quicker and quicker with his body, he must also speed up mentally. When we shoot something in slow-motion, like we might on a Flash-inclusive movie, the way that's done is by rolling the camera faster. You shoot more frames per second when you want to slow down the image. In the same way, the Flash, as he moves faster, has to speed up to his brain in order to slow down his perception. That's all well and good when he's in superhero-mode, but one of the questions of our film asks is how does that play out in social circumstances? I think there are qualities that have been detrimental to his social capacity.

AP: Were you at all concerned that a big production like this would leave less room for the kind of acting you practice?

Miller: I feel personally that if I'm struggling for integrity, I'm already lacking in it. I come from a place where instead of trying to manufacture my standards of integrity I'm trying to work in such a way that I trust in that inherently when I step to any project, whatever the scale. I want to maintain the integrity of my process. Outside of that, forget about it. It's anyone's game.

AP: But was there some appeal in bouncing off the more archetypal performances by Cavill, Gadot and Affleck?

Miller: Yeah, that's one of the great joys. In a situation like this to have the immense gravity of everything—which I think is really maintained in this film—but then be in a situation where I can improvise. I can play. I can react in the way that I feel Barry might, in a way that can feel deeply human. That was exciting to me, the idea that in the age of superhero films in their absolute crescendo, you have this character who's sort of a fan who appreciates what he's witnessing. And to have someone who's having really human reactions to what's going on—to see a villain and have a panic attack—I connect with that. I think people connect with that. I think that's where we are. In terms of realizing our true potential as superheroes, the species on the planet, we're in amateur, novice stages. We are tripping over our own feet like Barry in this movie.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Taylor Swift's 'Ready for It': Singer announces stadium tour

NEW YORK (AP)—Taylor Swift is going to bring her new album to life when she hits the road next year. The pop star announced the first of dates for her "reputation Stadium Tour" on Monday. It kicks off May 8 at the University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale, Arizona. Tickets for general public go on sale Dec. 13. Swift announced 27 shows stretching through October, with stops in Chicago, Philadelphia, Miami and Houston. Her last tour also visited stadiums, and it included a number of special guests, from singers like Justin Timberlake and the Weeknd to non-musicians such as Ellen DeGeneres and Kobe Bryant. Swift released her sixth album, "reputation," last week. It features the hit songs "...Ready for It?" and "Look What You Made Me Do."

'Lord of the Rings' TV series coming to Amazon Prime

NEW YORK (AP)—Amazon says it has acquired the global television rights to "The Lord of the Rings," based on the fantasy novels by J.R.R. Tolkien, with a multi-season commitment. Set in Middle Earth, this TV series will explore new story lines preceding Tolkien's "The Fellowship of the Ring." The deal includes a potential additional spin-off series, Amazon said Monday. "The Lord of the Rings" canon was named Amazon customers' favorite book of the millennium in 1999. The three films directed by Peter Jackson earned a combined gross of nearly $6 billion worldwide. No launch date or cast members for the new series was announced by Amazon.

'Hamilton' creator to use London debut as climate fundraiser

LONDON (AP)—The creator of the hit musical "Hamilton" plans to use the show's international debut in London next month to raise money to combat climate change. Writer, composer and actor Lin-Manuel Miranda and his wife, Vanessa Nadal, said Monday that donors to two environmental charities will be eligible to win the chance to accompany the couple to "Hamilton's" London premiere. Miranda told the Associated Press they chose the Natural Resources Defense Council and Britain-based charity 10:10 as the fundraiser's beneficiaries because of their commitment to combatting climate change. "With 'Hamilton's' first international production, we think it is appropriate to tackle an issue that affects the international community," Miranda said. The decision to focus on climate change gives the production another chance to call out U.S. President Donald Trump and his administration. Trump has threatened to pull the United States out of the 2015 Paris climate accord to control global warming.

Radhika Jones will be new Vanity Fair editor-in-chief

NEW YORK (AP)—Vanity Fair has chosen its successor to longtime editor-in-chief Graydon Carter. Radhika Jones, who for the past year has been editorial director of the books department at The New York Times, will join Vanity Fair on Dec. 11. Carter, editor in chief since 1992, announced earlier this year that he was stepping down. In a statement Monday, CEO Bob Sauerberg of parent company Conde Nast said that Jones was an "exceptionally talented editor" who would combine "distinctive journalism with culture and humor." Jones, 44, has previously worked at Time and The Paris Review. She tweeted Monday that she was "honored and excited" to follow Carter.

Colin Kaepernick named GQ magazine's citizen of the year

AP

In this Dec. 24, 2016, file photo San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick talks during a news conference after an NFL football game against the Los Angeles Rams.

NEW YORK (AP)—Free agent quarterback Colin Kaepernick has been named GQ's magazine's "Citizen of the Year" for his activism.

Kaepernick began kneeling instead of standing during the national anthem last season to protest racial inequality and police brutality. The demonstration sparked a wave of NFL protests by players during the anthem that repeatedly have been denounced by President Donald Trump. Kaepernick parted ways with the San Francisco 49ers in March and hasn't been signed by another team.

Kaepernick says on Twitter he's "honored" by the recognition.

The magazine 's story includes comments from several of Kaepernick's supporters and confidants. Rapper J. Cole says Kaepernick "sacrificed his dream" to stand for something. Ninety-year-old singer and activist Harry Belafonte says seeing people like Kaepernick taking action is "the greatest reward" he could ask for.

UK Scrabble group bans star player for breaking tile rule

LONDON (AP)—The Association of British Scrabble players banned one of its star players for three years after an independent investigation concluded that he had broken rules in the popular word game.

Allan Simmons has authored books on Scrabble and contributed game coverage to The Times newspaper, which first reported his ban from competition. The London-based newspaper says it will no longer use him as a contributor.

A committee member for the association, Elie Dangoor, said Monday that three independent witnesses saw Simmons put a hand with freshly drawn letter tiles back into a bag to draw more tiles—contrary to the rules.

"The natural conclusion had been that he had been cheating," Dangoor told The Associated Press.

There were four instances dating back to 2016, and the committee conducted an independent probe which was concluded a few weeks ago. The matter came to larger public attention only recently, and was discussed during the World English Language Scrabble Players Association event that ended Sunday.

Simmons told the Times he denied cheating, and that he had suffered the same "untimely bad luck from the bag as anyone else."

"You have to remember that at the top level, games can be quite intense and there's a lot going through one's mind let alone remembering to religiously ensure tile drawing rules are followed meticulously," Simmons was quoted by the Times as saying. "From the outset I have said that no one is beyond suspicion and complied fully with the investigative process."

Dangoor said that Simmons had been "a huge part of the game's development" and that there was "great disappointment," as he is a liked and respected part of the Scrabble community. But action had to be taken.

"There's no one person bigger than the game," Dangoor said.

Efforts to reach Simmons were unsuccessful. The Times quoted him as saying he planned to concentrate on "more important things in life."

Well-written thank-yous don't have to be long compositions

DEAR ABBY: You have mentioned in the past that you have a booklet on writing letters, including thank-you notes. Where do I send for it? I'll need four because my grandkids are lacking in that area.

It's truly a shame that younger generations haven't been taught about the importance of such notes. A simple "thank you" can not only open doors of opportunity both socially and in employment, but also help grandparents feel appreciated after their heartfelt gift-giving.

NANCY IN NEVADA

DEAR NANCY: If there is one subject that crops up repeatedly in my mail, it's thank-you notes—or rather, the lack of them. I print letters about it because of the number of complaints I receive. When a gift or a check isn't acknowledged, the (unwritten) message it sends is that the item wasn't appreciated, which is insulting and hurtful.

Chief among the reasons that thank-you notes are unwritten is that many people don't know what to say. They think the message has to be long and flowery when, in fact, keeping it short and to the point is more effective. My booklet, "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," contains samples of thank-you letters for birthday gifts, shower gifts and wedding gifts, as well as those that arrive around holiday time. It also includes letters of congratulations and ones regarding difficult subjects, such as the loss of a parent, a spouse or a child. It can be ordered by sending your name, mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to Dear Abby Letters Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.) With the holiday season approaching, this is the perfect time to reply with a handwritten letter, note or well-written email.

Because the composition of letters is not always effectively taught in the schools, my booklet can serve as a helpful tutorial, one that is valuable for parents as a way to teach their children to write using proper etiquette.

DEAR ABBY: I have been dating this guy for a year and a half and he's not into making love. He's happy if we only do it once a month and, when he does give in, he will only do the same old position. I, on the other hand, enjoy sex.

My ex (we have been apart eight years) is now in a sexless marriage. We started hooking up six months ago—just for sex—and it is awesome. Part of me feels guilty because I'm against cheating, but I need sex. What should I do?

CHEATING IN THE NORTH

DEAR CHEATING: Because the man you have been dating for a year and a half is a sexual mismatch, you need to end the romance. It would be kinder than continuing to cheat on him.

Your married ex may seem like an oasis in the sexual desert right now, but don't waste more time on him. He isn't your future; he's your past for good reason, I'm sure—so KEEP him there.

DEAR ABBY

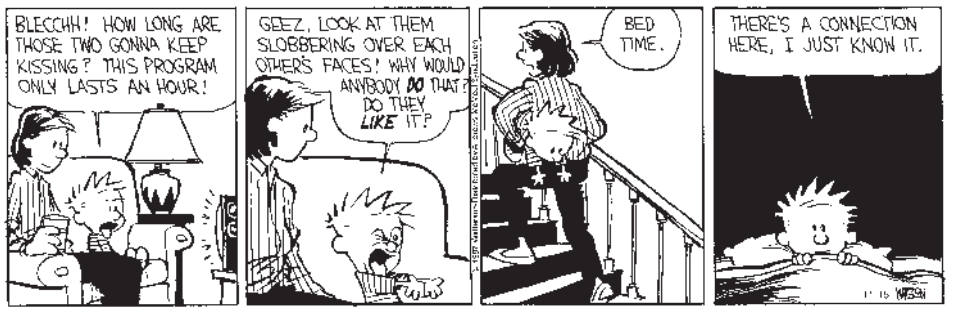
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

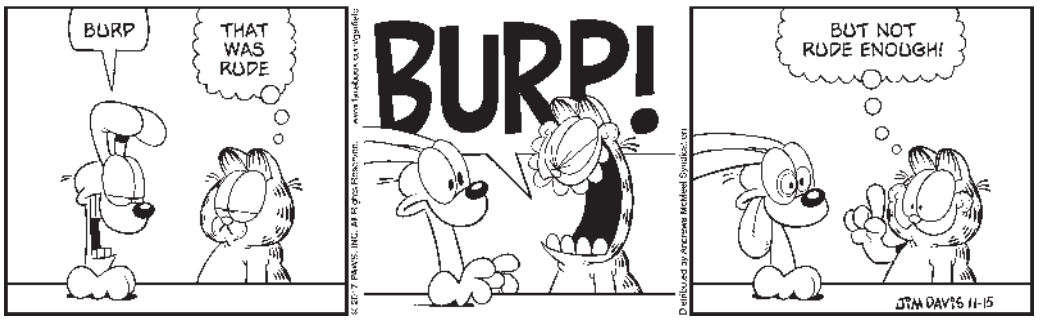
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


BLECCHH! HOW LONG ARE THOSE TWO GONNA KEEP KISSING? THIS PROGRAM ONLY LASTS AN HOUR!
GEEZ, LOOK AT THEM SLOBBERING OVER EACH OTHER'S FACES! WHY WOULD ANYBODY DO THAT? DO THEY LIKE IT?
BED TIME.
THERE'S A CONNECTION HERE, I JUST KNOW IT.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

HERE'S YOUR KEYBOARD. CAN I HELP YOU WITH ANYTHING ELSE? MAYBE SOME SOFTWARE?
THIS IS CALLED "FREELANCE WRITER." WITH THIS, ANYONE CAN WRITE A PROFESSIONAL NEWSLETTER, BLOG OR ARTICLE.
DO YOU HAVE PAPER BAGS? I THINK I'M GOING TO HYPERVENTILATE.
NEED AN ISACK OVER HERE!

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

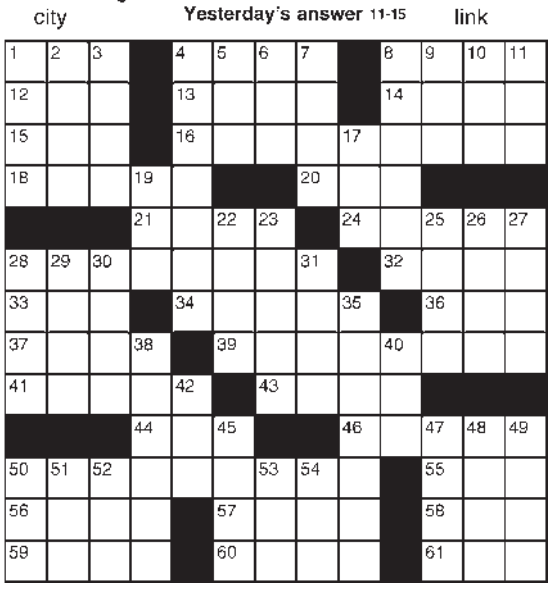
ACROSS
1 Mandible
4 Entryway
8 Hawaiian coffee
12 Before
13 Nullify
14 Dumbstruck
15 Sushi fish
16 Enchanted
18 Spokes
20 Chinese chairman
21 D.C. insiders
24 Oktoberfest dance
28 Nomadic Arabs
32 Line of fashion?
33 "Evil Woman" band
34 Daub
36 Yale grad
37 Send forth
39 Festooned
41 VIP on Air Force One
43 Gambling city
44 Arthur of "Maude"
46 Geologic period
50 Close associate
55 Fluffy scarf
56 Beige
57 O'Hara estate
58 Ordinal suffix
59 Yuletide tune
60 Milky gem
61 Verily

DOWN
1 Scoff
2 Vicinity
3 Use a blowtorch
4 Questionable
5 Undivided
6 Quirky
7 Peregrinate
8 Buzzing instruments
9 Wise bird
10 Formerly called
11 Toss in
17 Use a ray gun
19 Wall St. debut
22 Branch
23 Look of disdain
25 Onion's kin
26 Hardy cabbage
27 During
28 Gridlock sound
29 Ticklish Muppet
30 "Act now!"
31 "Smooth Operator" singer
35 Subscription extension
38 Bathwater quantity
40 Officer
42 Observe
45 Sax range
47 Follow orders
48 Doves' home
49 "Funny!"
50 Stiller or Stein
51 Green prefix
52 Rap's Dr. —
53 Napkin's place
54 Manmouse link

Solution time: 23 mins.

P	H	O	S		A	B	U	T		C	O	S
I	B	E	'		L	O	R	E		H	A	I
P	O	W	E	R	B	A	L	L		A	H	I
			L	A	S	T		L	E	M	U	R
A	M	P	L	Y			A	A	R	P		
N	O	R	A		B	A	_	L	G	A	M	E
A	N	I		P	E	T	A	L		G	A	L
G	A	M	E	O	V	E	R		A	N	T	I
			I	T	T	Y			3	L	E	S	S
W	I	T	C	H		V	O	M				
A	H	I		O	V	E	R	P	O	W	E	R
N	O	V		L	A	N	E		N	I	K	E
E	N	E		E	N	T	O		D	E	E	D

Yesterday's answer 11-15



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Shailene Woodley, 26; Jonny Lee Miller, 45; Beverly D'Angelo, 66; Sam Waterston, 77.

Happy Birthday: You'll be torn between taking action and taking time to strategize. Keep your thoughts clear and your plans doable. It's OK to move fast once you know exactly what you want to achieve. You can do great things this year if you are organized. Call on people you have worked with in the past to share their skills and expertise. Your numbers are 3, 10, 18, 25, 31, 33, 48.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Be careful when dealing with work-related matters or people of influence who could affect your future. Listen and look for solutions that will be in accordance with what the majority wants to see happen. Keep the peace. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Protect your money and your belongings. Don't share personal information or passwords. Focus on partnerships and how to best keep them amicable and advantageous. Taking an unusual route to reach your goals is in your best interest. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Change the way you do business, where you work or the people you collaborate with. Fine-tune what you want to accomplish and focus on what and who you actually need in your corner to reach your goals. 5 stars

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* You'll experience an unexpected turn of events if your relationships with others haven't been copacetic. Do your best to calm the situation by offering unique alternatives and incentives to those reluctant to do things your way. ✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Expect an emotional outburst if you haven't been taking care of your personal responsibilities. Avoid practicing poor habits that may bother the people who love and care about you. Soul-searching will be required if you want to make progress. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Live and learn. Look inward and concentrate on how you can strive to be the best you can possibly be. Personal growth and nurturing important relationships will help ease any stress you face. Take care of responsibilities graciously. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Anger issues should be dealt with in competitive ways. Challenges and debates will help you gain access to something you've wanted for some time. Don't venture far from the truth or someone will call you on your oversight. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Keep moving forward. Inject what you have done in the past into future plans in order to save time. Using your skills wisely will give you the edge you need to conquer what you set out to do. Keep your life simple. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Refuse to get emotional if someone pressures you. Size up the situation and do whatever it takes to live up to your promises and responsibilities. Embrace change by turning whatever comes your way into a new opportunity. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Avoid a run-in with someone in a position of authority. Use intelligence and charm to help present your plans. Anger will not solve anything, and it may even put you in a precarious position. Treat sensitive issues with courtesy and patience. ✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Channel your energy into getting your way. Negotiate on your own behalf and know exactly what you want the outcome to be. Your strength is in your ability to articulate the facts and come up with fair figures. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Concentrate on your goals and bringing about positive changes. A move or personal financial deal can be put into play. Personal growth is within reach if you are willing to put in the time and energy. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are edgy, intense and progressive. You are diverse and secretive.

To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	9	5				2	4	
2			7		1			6
			2					9
			9					8
			5					7
		1					3	
	6					4		
1					7			
9	8	4	6		3	7	1	2

Difficulty Level ★★★ 11/15

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

5	2	4	7	8	1	9	3	6
9	8	6	3	2	4	1	7	5
1	3	7	5	6	9	8	4	2
2	6	8	1	5	3	4	9	7
7	1	5	4	9	8	2	6	3
3	4	9	6	7	2	5	8	1
8	5	2	9	3	7	6	1	4
4	9	3	2	1	6	7	5	8
6	7	1	8	4	5	3	2	9

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

FAMOUS JANES (AND A JAYNE) Solution: 6 letters

W	M	T	L	G	F	T	T	E	B	B	I	S	A	L
I	C	T	I	L	T	T	O	I	L	L	E	W	L	A
E	D	A	E	O	A	D	A	M	S	Y	I	E	E	P
D	O	R	P	R	E	H	S	A	M	L	H	R	X	O
L	N	P	O	W	E	L	L	O	L	C	O	D	A	T
I	A	U	S	T	E	N	U	O	T	B	N	N	N	A
N	L	Y	N	C	H	R	U	I	E	O	O	A	D	I
I	D	Y	J	I	U	G	M	R	T	C	D	M	E	R
A	C	O	L	S	H	Z	T	L	R	U	U	Y	R	E
L	H	L	S	B	E	S	I	E	N	R	O	W	G	L
P	I	E	Y	L	I	M	N	A	A	T	L	M	R	A
Y	L	N	E	H	A	R	M	A	N	I	N	O	Ⓔ	D
L	D	V	E	H	U	E	K	E	N	N	E	D	Ⓨ	E
W	Y	A	T	T	P	O	N	I	G	R	E	E	Ⓡ	R
P	A	U	L	E	Y	N	O	S	N	A	D	L	Ⓔ	I

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Adams, Alexander, Andrews, Asher, Austen, Birkin, Child, Curtin, Danson, Elliott, Eyre, Greer, Grey, Hall, Hamilton, Harman, Hill, Iredale, Kennedy, Lady, Lapotaire, Loudon, Lynch, McDonald, Model, Name, Pauley, Plain, Poni, Powell, Pratt, Relf, Roberts, Russell, Seymour, Sibbett, Toppan, Turner, Velez Mitchell, Wiedlin, Willoughby, Wyatt, Wyman, Yolen

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Italy misses World Cup for first time in 60 years

MILAN (A)—Players from both teams slumped to the ground, the Swedes in exhausted ecstasy, the Italians in losers' agony.

On a starry night in Milan, four-time champion Italy failed to qualify for the World Cup for the first time in six decades. Sweden advanced for the first time since 2006.

Despite three quarters of possession, Italy was stymied by a goalless draw in the second leg of their playoff on Monday and Sweden prevailed 1-0 on aggregate.

"It's a black moment for our game," Italy midfielder Daniele De Rossi said. "Unfortunately there will be a lot of time to analyze it. The only thing I can say is that we showed few ideas and not much in the way of tactics."

The Sweden players ran over to celebrate with the traveling fans, a sea of joyful yellow at San Siro. The Italians looked on in shock and disbelief or put their head in their hands as though it were too painful to watch.

Many of them were in tears, especially captain and goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon, who played what he said was his last international after 20 years between the posts for the Azzurri.

"We all need to look within and find a way to bounce back," defender Giorgio Chiellini said. "We need to get back to the level we deserve to be at."

AP

Italy's Matteo Darmian falls over Sweden's Johan Larsson during the World Cup qualifying play-off second leg soccer match between Italy and Sweden, at the Milan San Siro stadium, Italy, Monday, Nov. 13, 2017.

Italy had failed to qualify for the World Cup just once before, reaching 14 straight since falling short in 1958. The Azzurri did not enter the first World Cup in 1930.

The last major competitions Italy failed to qualify for were the 1984 and 1992 European Championships.

It could have been worse for Italy, as Sweden was denied what looked like two clear-cut penalties for handballs, first by Matteo Darmian and then Andrea Barzagli.

Italy had a penalty appeal of its own waved off by Spanish referee Antonio Mateu Lahoz when Marco Parolo was tripped from behind by Ludwig Augsustinsson.

But the Azzurri struggled to carve out clear chances, and only one of their six shots on target really tested goalkeeper Robin Olsen.

It would be easy to lay the blame squarely on Gian Piero Ventura. The Italy coach will naturally take the lion's share, but the Azzurri's problems run much deeper.

"I want to apologize to the Italian people for the result," Ventura said. "Not for the commitment, and the desire and everything else but for the result.

The rot started long before Ventura took charge.

After winning the World Cup in 2006 for a fourth time, Italy went out at the group stage of the next two editions. It fared somewhat better at the European Championship, reaching the final in 2012 and quarterfinal elimination in 2008 and 2016.

However, Antonio Conte's Italy side overachieved in France last year, when it surprisingly beat Spain in the round of 16 before losing on penalties to world champion Germany.

For a long time, Italy has lacked a creative force, successors to Andrea Pirlo and Francesco Totti of the 2006 side who could change a match with one moment of magic.

Mario Balotelli was the star of Euro 2012 but fell out of favor after Italy's woeful showing at the last World Cup.

The lack of stars in the Italy team is reflected in the Italian league.

Judge, Bellinger unanimous picks as Rookies of the Year

NEW YORK (AP)—The only major question was whether it would be unanimous—and it was.

Aaron Judge and Cody Bellinger are baseball's Rookies of the Year, after their record-setting home run binges left no need for any dissenting opinions. Judge led the American League with 52 homers, the most ever by a rookie. Bellinger hit 39 and had to settle for the National League's rookie record.

Judge and Bellinger received every first-place vote available from the Baseball Writers' Association of America. Judge became the first New York Yankees player to receive this award since Derek Jeter in 1996. Bellinger gave the Dodgers a record 18th Rookie of the Year winner.

"Watching him from the West Coast, what he did on the East Coast, was awesome," Bellinger said. "I was a big fan of his, and met him during the All-Star game, and he's a humble dude. I think we're both reflecting, now that the season's over, on the kind of seasons that we've had."

This was the first time both Rookie of the Year awards were unanimous since 1997, when Nomar Garciaparra of Boston and Scott Rolen of Philadelphia won.

This season's votes were announced Monday night. Boston outfielder Andrew Benintendi finished second in the AL, followed by Baltimore slugger Trey Mancini. St. Louis infielder Paul DeJong was the NL runner-up, with Pittsburgh first baseman Josh Bell finishing third.

Judge is also an MVP finalist.

"Obviously it was an amazing, remarkable year that no one would have predicted," Yankees general manager Brian Cashman said. "When you drop 52 -- I think he really should have had 53, one that instant replay didn't protect. ... It should be a higher number. It was just an incredible year."

Ichiro Suzuki in 2001 and Fred Lynn in 1975 are the only players to win the AL MVP and Rookie of the Year awards in the same year.

The Yankees entered this season with marginal expectations by their standards, but the prodigious power of Judge and catcher Gary Sanchez transformed them almost overnight into an exciting young team with tremendous potential. They made the postseason as a wild card.

"It's exciting times right now to be wearing pinstripes," Judge said. "To come up through the minor leagues with a lot of these guys, watch them develop, and now to see what they're doing at the major league level is really impressive."

Judge's 495-foot shot on June 11 was the longest home run in the major leagues this season, according to Statcast. Although he struck out 208 times in the regular season and 27 more in the postseason, the 25-year-old outfielder is one of a handful of reasons why the Yankees suddenly seem to have one of the brightest futures of any team in baseball.

Marlins have Stanton on the market as GM meetings start

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—For sale: 28-year-old chiseled slugger who led the major leagues with 59 home runs, the most in 16 years.

Price: $295 million over a decade.

Complication: Giancarlo Stanton only goes where he wants to, since the star right fielder has a full no-trade provision.

Now under a new ownership group that put former New York Yankees star Derek Jeter in charge of baseball and business operations, the Miami Marlins have concluded their payroll-paring regime is willing to explore trades of Stanton and other high-priced players.

"I think over the next few days I'll get a feel for what the marketplace is for our players," Marlins president of baseball operations Mike Hill said Monday, the opening day of the annual general managers' meetings.

Miami had a $116 million payroll on Aug. 31, up from $81 million at the end of last year. Bruce Sherman's group bought the team on Oct. 2 from Jeffrey Loria and is exploring trades for players who contributed to the team's eighth straight losing season. The Marlins have not made the playoffs since winning the 2003 World Series, the second-longest postseason drought behind Seattle.

Stanton's salary jumps from $14.5 million this year to $25 million next season. It peaks at $32 million annually from 2023-25.

When he spoke Oct. 25 at the World Series while receiving an award, Stanton said he didn't have "stamped-out ideas" whether he would want to stay in Miami during a rebuild. The Marlins seem to know which teams he would accept a trade to.

"I do have a sense, and we'll keep that internal, and at the appropriate time we'll discuss whatever we need to discuss," Hill said. "We work internally. We do what we need to do, and then if we need to present him with something, we'll do so at the appropriate time."

Among other costly Marlins next year are third baseman Martin Prado ($14 million), right-hander Edinson Volquez ($13 million), center fielder Christian Yelich ($7 million, with $37.5 million more guaranteed over the following three years) and second baseman Dee Gordon ($10.5 million, with $27.5 million guaranteed over the following two seasons).

Given a penurious approach, the Marlins may find trades make sense.

"It's tough to be competitive if you're overly concentrated in two or three players," New York Mets general manager Sandy Alderson said. "I think we experienced some of that last year."

High-revenue teams would be the most likely matches. The New York Yankees do not appear to be a probable destination. Right fielder Aaron Judge won the AL Rookie of the Year award unanimously after hitting 52 homers, center fielder Aaron Hicks played well when he wasn't hurt, and Clint Frazier is competing for playing time among a group that includes veterans Brett Gardner and Jacoby Ellsbury.

LeBron leads Cavs' comeback versus Knicks

NEW YORK (AP) — LeBron James had 23 points and 12 assists, Kyle Korver scored 19 of his 21 points in the fourth quarter to spark a huge comeback, and the Cleveland Cavaliers beat the New York Knicks 104-101 on Monday night.

James also had a technical foul after a first-quarter altercation with Frank Ntilikina and Enes Kanter, which seemed to charge up the Knicks as they built what became a 23-point lead late in the third quarter.

But the Cavaliers made nine 3-pointers in the fourth after hitting just seven through three quarters, charging back for their eighth straight victory at Madison Square Garden.

Tim Hardaway Jr. had 28 points and 10 rebounds, and Kanter added 20 points and 16 boards. But Kristaps Porzingis shot only 7 for 21 while scoring 20 points as the Knicks blew their chance to beat the Cavs for the second time this season.

New York led by 15 after three but the Cavs surrounded James with plenty of perimeter shooting and the Knicks couldn't contain them. Cleveland tied it on Channing Frye's 3 with 2:15 to go before James made it 100-97 on another 3 with 1:23 left.

Pelicans 106, Hawks 105

In New Orleans, Darius Miller hit four 3-pointers in the fourth quarter, when he scored 14 of his 21 points, and New Orleans overcame a sloppy performance to beat struggling Atlanta.

DeMarcus Cousins had 22 points and 16 rebounds, and Anthony Davis added 13 points, 10 rebounds and four blocked shots for the Pelicans, who have won five of six. E'Twaun Moore tied a career high with 24 points for New Orleans.

Kent Bazemore scored 22 points for the Hawks, who led by 14 before fading to lose their fourth straight.

Bazemore also missed a critical free throw with 37.1 seconds left. Atlanta still had a chance to take a late lead, but Dennis Schroder's errant pass toward Tyler Cavanaugh sailed out of bounds with 3.2 seconds to go.

Bucks 110, Grizzlies 103

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokounmpo had 27 points and nine rebounds to lead Milwaukee over Memphis.

Khris Middleton and John Henson had 17 points apiece as the Bucks won their third straight.

Tyreke Evans scored 14 of his 27 points in the fourth quarter for the Grizzlies, and Dillon Brooks added 19 points. Evans scored nine consecutive points to pull Memphis into an 84-all tie early in the fourth quarter.

Lakers 100, Suns 93

In Phoenix, Jordan Clarkson scored a season-high 25 points and Los Angeles pulled away late to beat Phoenix.

Devin Booker had 36 points, his second consecutive game of at least 35, for the Suns.

Brook Lopez and Kentavious Caldwell-Pope scored 15 apiece for the Lakers, who snapped a three-game losing streak and won in Phoenix for the second time this season.

Lakers rookie Lonzo Ball, coming off his first career triple-double on Saturday night, did not play in the fourth quarter, when the Lakers pulled out the victory. He had seven points on 3-of-10 shooting, five rebounds, five assists and four turnovers in 28 minutes.

AP

Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James, left, drives to the basket against New York Knicks' Kristaps Porzingis (6) during the first half of a NBA basketball game at Madison Square Garden in New York, Monday, Nov. 13, 2017.

Wizards 110, Kings 92

In Washington, John Wall had 21 points and nine assists, Marcin Gortat scored 18 and Washington defeated Sacramento for its third straight win.

Otto Porter Jr. and reserve Mike Scott chipped in 15 points apiece as six Wizards scored in double figures.

After losing to the Mavericks 113-99 in the opener of a four-game homestand, the Wizards outscored the Lakers, Hawks and Kings by an average of 111-94.

George Hill led Sacramento with 16 points.

Wall was 8 of 9 from the field, including 4 for 4 from 3-point range.

Timberwolves 109, Jazz 98

In Salt Lake City, Karl-Anthony Towns had 24 points and 13 rebounds, and Jimmy Butler added 21 points and 10 assists to help Minnesota get past Utah.

Jeff Teague scored 22 points for the Timberwolves, and Taj Gibson had 15 points and 10 rebounds. Minnesota (8-5) snapped a two-game skid after shooting 52.1 percent (37 of 71) from the field.

Donovan Mitchell scored 24 points to lead the Jazz (6-8), who lost for the fourth time in their last five home games. Utah fell behind 33-14 heading into the second quarter.

Trail Blazers 99, Nuggets 82

In Portland, Trail Blazers center Jusuf Nurkic appeared to draw some motivation in facing his old team.

"He was aggressive," said former Denver teammate Nikola Jokic, "looking to score."

Nurkic had 17 points and the Trail Blazers beat the Denver Nuggets to snap a two-game losing streak.

Portland built an 86-66 lead early in the fourth quarter on Noah Vonleh's dunk and cruised the rest of the way. CJ McCollum also had 17 and Damian Lillard finished with 15 points and seven assists.

Warriors 110, Magic 100

In Oakland, one night last week, Kevin Durant sat out. On Monday, it was Stephen Curry with the same bruised thigh muscle that sidelined the NBA Finals MVP.

Both games, Golden State showed off its remarkable depth, withstanding the absence of a big star.

Durant had 21 points, a season-high eight assists and seven rebounds, Shaun Livingston scored a season-best 16 points in place of the injure Curry, and the champion Warriors pulled away in the second half to beat the Orlando Magic for their seventh straight win.

Draymond Green had a season-high 20 points, five assists, four rebounds and two steals as the Warriors completed an unbeaten four-game homestand.

Newton, Panthers hammer Dolphins for 3rd straight win

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Cam Newton was tired of the Carolina Panthers' defense getting all of the glory.

Newton took it as a challenge when the defense vaulted to the league's No. 1 ranking last week, saying it was time for the offense to strive to match them.

Newton did his part on Monday night, throwing for 254 yards and four touchdowns and running for 95 more as the Panthers piled up a franchise-record 548 yards in a 45-21 rout of the Miami Dolphins.

"It's nice to see them have this type of breakout game," Panthers coach Ron Rivera said of the offense, which had 30 first downs and converted 11 of 14 third downs.

"I still feel like we are scratching the surface of our potential in this offense. We have to trust in our ability to execute our coach's plan," Newton said.

Newton improved to 5-1 in Monday night games, while averaging 270.5 yards per game with 15 touchdowns and four interceptions.

"There is something about this stage with him," Rivera said. "He played a tremendous game."

Jonathan Stewart ran for a season-high 110 yards, and Newton had a 69-yard jaunt on a read option as the Panthers racked up 294 yards on the ground. It was Stewart's first 100-yard game since last December at Washington.

Rookie Christian McCaffrey scored touchdowns rushing and receiving, and Devin Funchess caught five passes for 92 yards and two touchdowns as the Panthers (7-3) remained a half-game behind the NFC South-leading Saints heading into their bye week.

Newton had his share of fun on the field.

After being tackled on his 69-yard run, an exhausted Newton laid on the ground smiling and shaking his body as if trying to get feeling back into his legs.

Teammates joked with Newton that backup quarterback Derek Anderson could have scored on the play.

"When you ain't got no gas left and your check engine light is on and blinking, get gas at the next stop or so, man, you just have to try to celebrate when you can celebrate, brother," Newton said. "I was just hoping coach didn't come back with another run play for me."

He tiredly handed off on the next two plays.

"Everything was fun out there," said Funchess, who became the team's No. 1 receiver when Kelvin Benjamin was traded to Buffalo two weeks ago.

Jay Cutler had 213 yards passing with two touchdowns and one interception for the Dolphins (4-5), who have lost three straight. Jarvis Landry and Julian Thomas both caught TD passes for Miami.

The game turned with 41 seconds left in the first half, when Luke Kuechly made a leaping interception along the sideline with Carolina leading 10-7.

Four plays later, Newton connected with tight end Ed Dickson on a 7-yard touchdown pass. That opened the floodgates as the Panthers scored touchdowns on five straight possessions in their most explosive output of the season.

"In an eight-minute span, the game got away from us," Dolphins coach Adam Gase said. "It snowballed. We couldn't prevent the big runs once they got going."

The Panthers had entered the game 21st in the league in total offense and 24th in scoring.

"We get to watch them—that's the fun part," Kuechly said of the offense.

It was a big game for Stewart, who fumbled twice in last week's 20-17 win over the Atlanta Falcons.

"He might have been playing with a chip on his shoulder, but we just wanted to get him to that second level," Panthers offensive tackle Matt Kalil said.

OES gets support from Rep. Barcinas

JON PEREZ

Rep. Donald C. Barcinas (R-Saipan), sixth left, joins Oleai Elementary School principal Jasylene Parico, fifth left, and some of her students during yesterday's check presentation for the renovation of their basketball court.

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Oleai Elementary School received a huge boost from Rep. Donald C. Barcinas (R-Saipan) after the freshman lawmaker donated money to assist them in the renovation of its basketball court.

Barcinas turned over a check worth $3,800 to OES principal Jasylene Parico and officials of the student council yesterday at the school grounds.

Northern Marianas Sports Association staffers Eli Rangamar and Greg Iginoef, and a representative from contractor GR Corp. were also present during the check presentation.

Barcinas said the money would help the school in resurfacing and improving the basketball court, especially now that the paint had already faded.

"It's always nice to have projects for the kids. After the renovation is done, the students will have a proper place to play and have some recreational activity," said Barcinas.

"They could also have some bleachers in the court so they could host some games where fans can enjoy watching basketball matches," he added.

Parico said the whole OES community is thankful for Barcinas' donation. "This will go a long way to help improve our basketball court. Thank you to Congressman Barcinas for the donation."

A non-skid type of paint will be used for the resurfacing of the court's floor, making it smoother and less prone to injury for the students who are going to use the facility. The renovation project may be completed in about a week more, depending on the weather.

Meanwhile, Rangamar said that they would provide additional equipment and other forms of assistance to the school.

"We're going to give basketballs and some nets to the school with the help of some businesses and Congressman Barcinas."

He added that they are also ready to hold basketball clinics to hone and improve the skills of Oleai students and donate a special type of goal so that more children could play and shoot some hoops.

MCS

From Page 28

vision with a time of 9:33, which was slower compared to the 8:14 he registered in the second leg of the annual cross country series and the 8:19 he recorded when he placed first in last month's final leg. His time in the season-ending race, however, gave him a comfortable lead over William S. Reyes Elementary School's Imtiaz Nadim, who clocked in at 10:15. Zhi Lin, also from WSR, rounded on the Top 3 with his 10:26. Saipan International School's Anthony Gregoire was fourth at 11:08, while Bo Chen of Agape Christian School placed fifth (11:55), and Eucon's John Yu came in at sixth (13:18).

Chavez, meanwhile, bested Brilliant Star School's Savita Sikkel by four seconds to rule the girls U11 race. Chavez recorded 9:36 against the 9:40 of Sikkel. The Eucon student was also the second overall finisher of the one-lap run in the U11 age group.

Saipan International School's Dana Lee placed third in the girls U11 with a time of 10:59, while Mt. Carmel School's Hitomi Sato was the fourth best runner after coming in at 13:52. WSR's Jadine Deblois was fifth (13:58) and Cathy Woo of SIS finished sixth (15:00).

JON PEREZ

Mt. Carmel School's Kern Han, right, takes the finisher ticket from a volunteer during last Saturday's 2017 All NMA Schools Cross Country Finals held at the Saipan Country Club.

Meanwhile, Kelley McCallion of SIS topped the boys U9 division with a time of 10:18, while Eugene So of Saipan Community School was almost a minute behind at 11:06 to settle for second. Yong Lim of ACS completed the Top 3 at 11:09. ACS' Bowie Wu (16:43), SCS' Joshua Yeo (17:16), and MCS' Jess Jiang (19:20) finished fourth to sixth, respectively.

Mary Fu of ACS won the girls U9 gold medal with a time of 10:15 and was followed SCS teammates Hilah Bacani (12:12) and Lola Guerrero (12:17). Barbara Wong of ACS came in at fourth with a time of 12:90, while Phoenix Gross of SIS was fifth at 15:02.

ACS and SIS had the most runners both in the boys and girls U9 and U11 divisions, fielding five each while SCS had four. MCS and WSR had three each, while Eucon and BSS entered two and one apiece.

Results of the boys and girls U7 divisions and the team champions in each of the six age groups were unavailable at press time.

XTERRA

From Page 28

tion of $16,052,583 for MVA, but diverted $450,000 from that amount to purchase a fire truck for the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and another $69,435 to the Public School System's tourism-related programs.

The MVA board also weighed on the declining number of pros in the last few years as another reason they decided to finally pull the plug on XTERRA Saipan. XTERRA Saipan, during its early years, has attracted more than 30 pros and over 200 off-island competitors.

Concepcion said that the CNMI's southern island neighbor has also decided to discontinue XTERRA Guam, which used to take place a week after XTERRA Saipan. "It's expensive to host large international sporting events."

"We've seen XTERRA numbers drop significantly over the years and we note that Guam has also stopped hosting XTERRA. So this, along with the reduced budget for FY17, is the main reason for cutting XTERRA from our sporting portfolio," he added.

Concepcion said MVA would now pour most of its resources on other sports events, such as the Saipan International Marathon—which is now certified by the International Association of Athletics Federations and the Association of International Marathons and Distance Races.

"On the positive side of things, we will be concentrating our efforts on the Saipan Marathon scheduled for March 2018 and Ironman 70.3 Saipan scheduled for April 2018, along with smaller sporting events throughout the year in Rota, Tinian, and Saipan."

"With the Saipan Marathon now internationally recognized and certified by IAAF and AIMS, we will focus on expanding this event to attract more runners from around the world," said Concepcion.

Ironman 70.3 Saipan is another event that they would promoto further with the branding behind it. "The branding behind this event is key as the Ironman is seen as the most prestigious triathlon event in the world, so the MVA will work with our partners to enhance its appeal and boost participant numbers from overseas."

KOSRAE

From Page 28

inaugural event after completing a 15-14 come-from-behind win over Guam in last year's tournament held on Saipan.

Kosrae, which placed fourth in the 2016 competition, managed to go toe-to-toe with the CNMI sluggers the entire game of yesterday's opener, but the nine errors the former committed was the glaring statistic that foiled its chances of pulling off an upset over the defending champion. Team CNMI only had one error.

"It was a good thing that the boys were able to hit and score. It was a really close match and we managed to sneak in that game-winning hit," Team CNMI manager Tony Rogolifoi told Saipan Tribune in a phone interview last night.

Team CNMI will take a rest today and will face Guam's Under-23 national junior team at 7pm on Thursday. Rogolifoi's wards will then play a double-header on Friday, taking on Palau at 3pm and the Guam National Team at 7pm.

Joining Tenorio and Evangelista on Team CNMI are Brian Camacho, Angel Palacios, Jobe Reyes, Ian Norita, Peter Tomokane, Virgil Secharmidal, Franco Nakamura, Henry Lizama Jr., Ricardo Dela Cruz, Barry Sunumai, Jerald Cabrera, Manny Cabrera, Joe Palacios, Nathan Camacho, Jhace Palacios, Lorenzo Sebaklim, J.J. Lifoifoi, L.J. Sebaklim, and Ethan Babauta.

Meanwhile, with Team CNMI competing in Guam, games in the Saipan Baseball League's Masters and U25 divisions from Nov. 14 to 20 have been rescheduled. Team CNMI will return to Saipan on Nov. 21 and SBL games will resume the following day.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

White Haus' Dan Hernandez, left, and Jun Tabora, right, challenge the shot of Empe Light's Sean Rabasto during the second quarter of their game in the IT&E-sponsored Ali'i Blue Haus caging last Sunday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

White Haus clinches playoff berth

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

White Haus advanced to the playoff round of the 2nd Ali'i Blue Haus Invitational Basketball League following a 107-106 overtime win over Empe Light last Sunday at the Gillette Multipurpose Gymnasium.

It was a come-from-behind victory for White Haus, which was down by as many as 17 points in the second quarter and was still behind by 8 at the end of the third before making a run in the final canto and stealing the win in the extension period.

White Haus exploded for 30 points in the fourth quarter for its biggest output in the game. Ten of them came from Jun Tabora, who also drilled White Haus' last two field goals to send the match in overtime. Darwin Barbo added a pair of important free throws, while Dan Hernandez and Paul Quizon knocked in triples in the fourth canto to help White Haus get back into the game.

Hernandez and Tabora also scored in the extra five minutes of the match, but it was the last 5 points of unlikely hero Biboy Centina that lifted White Haus to the close win.

With the tough victory, White Haus improved its record to 6-4 for fifth place in the team standings and a spot to the eight-squad playoff round, joining early qualifiers Silencer (8-2), Black Mamba (7-2), Tropang Ridhors (7-4), and Batang Bear Brand (6-3).

Empe Light fell to a 3-7 slate with one game left in the elimination round and has to wait for the results of the remaining matches to determine its playoff chances. Empe Light is at the No. 11 spot in the team rankings behind Spigen (5-5), Green Minded (5-6), Team Sawi (4-5), Gold Ballers (4-6), and Vendetta (4-6) and ahead of the Green Archers (1-10), which is the first team to be booted out in the tournament.

Vendetta, which defeated the Green Archers in last Sunday's third game, 95-89, suddenly kept its playoff hopes alive and won't be joining the latter to the exit door as earlier reported.

James Dela Cruz, Ed Pangilinan, and Dexter Tenorio teamed up in giving Vendetta its fourth straight victory as all three scored in double figures. Dela Cruz had a team-high 27 points, while Pangelinan and Tenorio chipped in 24 and 20, respectively.

Pangelinan nailed 6 consecutive markers in the homestretch to foil the Green Archers' comeback bid, while Dela Cruz registered 10 points in the fourth canto.

Second Game

White Haus 107—Tabora 30, Barbo 23, Nonato 20, Hernandez 14, Ocampo 9, Quizon 6, Centina 5.

Empe Light 106 — Rabasto 33, Reyes 24, Lerio 22, Gallardo 12, Espinosa 9, Peredo 6.

Scoring by quarters: 17-24, 35-50, 64-72, 94-94, 107-106 (OT).

Third Game

Vendetta 95 — Dela Cruz 27, Pangelinan 24, Tenorio 20, Libuw 10, Castro 11, Yarofalir 3.

Green Archers 89 — Ferrer 31, Demapan 24, Danipog 20, Pestillos 8, Enriquez 6, Mendiola 2.

Scoring by quarters: 21-17, 42-40, 68-66, 95-89.

Joyce, Chung take Golden Boot awards

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Kanoa Football Club 's Paulynn Joyce and MP United's Andrew Chung won the Golden Boot titles in their respective divisions in the 2017 NMIFA Fall Youth League

Joyce, despite failing to score in their final game of the season last Saturday at the Francisco M. Sablan Middle School Field, still had the most goals in the girls U15 division after collecting 13 in 10 matches. She had three in their 5-1 semis win over Southern United FC for the baker's dozen and a slim lead over runner-up Jerlyn Castillo (12).

Castillo, who plays for Southern United, moved up to No. 2 at the end of the season and dislodged Shirley's Therize Millare, after making a hat-trick in their 4-2 win over MP United in the battle for third place last Saturday.

Millare dropped to third, as she got only one goal in their final game this season for a total of 11. Millare's teammate Katherin Magat was the fourth player in the division to register at least 10 goals this fall after adding one more during their 3-1 penalty shootout loss to Kanoa-1 in their title game last Saturday. The two Shirley's players made the goals that sent the championship game to a shootout.

Valerie Myers (7) and Katrina Costales (7), also from Shirley's, MP United's Stella McCallion (6) and Maury Zon Tybaco (8), Kanoa's Princess Alcantara (5) and Khristelle Itaas (5), and Matansa's Jannah Casarino (5) rounded out the Top 10.

Meanwhile, in the co-ed U12 division, Chung is the runaway Gold Boot winner after gaining 39 goals. He capped the season by scoring the lone goal in MP United's 1-2 loss at the hands of Kanoa-1 during the division title-deciding game last Saturday at the Hopwood Middle School Field.

The MP United striker scored in all 10 games this season, getting six goals in their first two matches and on Week 8 of the league. He prevailed over Paire's Dylan Mister, who earned 21 after adding three more in their last match of the season, and TanHoldings' Anthony Bergancia (19). Matansa's Jin Xin Wen jumped from fifth to fourth with his 18 goals, while TanHoldings' Angelo Pulido settled for fifth after tallying 16.

Other players who scored at least 10 goals this season were TanHoldings' Mark Joseph Roque (12), Kanoa-1's Markus Toves (11) and Andrew Sablan (13), Matansa's Alex Megino (11), and MP United's Richard Castro (11).

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

MP United Football Club's Andrew Chung, left, is guarded by Kanoa-1 FC's Daniel Mar Pablo during the second half of their co-ed U12 division game in the 2017 NMIFA Fall Youth League last Saturday at the Hopwood Middle School Field.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Kanoa Football Club's Paulynn Joyce, left, collides with Shirley's FC's Joannah Carreon as they battle for possession during their girls U15 title game in the 2017 NMIFA Fall Youth League last Saturday at the Francisco M. Sablan Middle School Field.

Koreans sign up for Rota Blue Triathon

Efforts by the Marianas Visitors Authority to gain more international participants for the 23rd Annual Rota Blue Triathlon that will be held this Saturday are paying off with the recent registration of 10 athletes from Korea.

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For an event long dominated by Japanese athletes, co-organizer Kiyokazu Fitness Club (KFC) has made intensified efforts this year to market the event in Korea, resulting in the new additions to the race.

"Although flight service to Rota remains a challenge, especially for bringing in bikes, we were determined to introduce the event to our other markets so we can grow the event," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "With a promotional video produced by KFC, so far we have been able to woo 10 athletes from Korea, adding to the 60 from Japan who already registered. It's a great return for the Rota Blue after last year's hiatus."

The 22-minute video features the unspoiled nature of Rota and warm island welcome from residents.

Triathlon magazine *LUMINA* and the nationwide Tokyo Broadcasting System are slated to cover the event. According to KFC president Kiyozaku Onishi, they have also been approached by worldwide triathlon organization Ocean Lava to join their world series event.

Rota Blue Triathlon is an annual signature event of the MVA featuring two distances: the A-type half marathon distance, which includes a 1.5-kilometer swim, followed by a 40K rigorous biking course, and a 10K run (no time limit); and the B-type Olympic, which has a distance of 2K in the swim leg, 90K in the bike course, and 21K run (8-hour time limit). For team competitors, there will also be triathlon of the A-type distance, again with no time limit.

The pre-race briefing for all participants will be held this Friday at Rota Resort & Country Club at 6:30pm. Starting time for both distances is 6:30am at Rota's East Harbor. Wetsuits are permitted, while bike helmets are required. Registration fees are lower this year: $60 for A-type course solo competitors and $50 for each member in the team division. The fee for the B- type course is $80. The entry fee includes an event T-shirt, high-quality swim cap, and an invitation to the awards banquet.

For more information, visit the Events Calendar at www.mymarianas.com or contact MVA Community Projects specialist Ed Diaz at 1-670-664-3210 or ediaz@mymarianas.com, or contact Sandra Atalig at the MVA Rota Office at 1-670-532-0327 or satalig@mymarianas.com. ***(PR)***

Italy misses World Cup for first time in 60 years

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LeBron leads Cavs' comeback versus Knicks

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Walk-off hit lifts NMI past Kosrae

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Team CNMI players and officials pose for a photo upon their arrival in Guam last Sunday to compete in the 2nd Micronesian Baseball Classic.

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Anthony Tenorio's walk-off hit helped Team CNMI overcome Kosrae's gallant stand and squeeze out a 3-2 win in the opening game of the 2017 Micronesian Baseball Classic yesterday at the Paseo Stadium in Agana, Guam.

With the match tied at 2-2 and runners at first and second at the bottom of the seventh, Tenorio hit a grounder to left and A.J. Evangelista sprinted toward home plate to score the winning run for the defending champion. The CNMI topped the

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XTERRA Saipan out as MVA shifts focus on other events

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Marianas Visitors Authority has decided to drop the XTERRA Saipan Championship from its 2018 sports calendar due to the high cost of keeping the event and the declining number of professional triathletes competing in the off-road race.

Next year would have been the 18th edition of the annual multisport race, which is considered the Crown Jewel of XTERRA and would have kicked off the Asia-Pacific Tour Elite series. XTERRA Saipan was first held in 2002.

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MVA managing director Chris Concepcion told *Saipan Tribune* that their decision is sort of bad news/good news for the CNMI, as this would give them more time and resources to focus on promoting other international sporting events being held in the Commonwealth.

"The MVA has decided not to host XTERRA in 2018 due to many factors, including the decline in the number of participants from overseas and the cut in our budget for fiscal year 2018," Concepcion said.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres signed an Fiscal Year 2018 budget alloca-

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JON PEREZ
Austrian pro Carina Wassle, right, negotiates the rocky terrain of Saipan's jungle ahead of Joe Miller of the Philippines during the trail run leg of last year's XTERRA Saipan.

MCS, Eucon students split top honors in U11

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas Athletics

Mt. Carmel School's Kern Han and Eucon International School's Andrei Chavez ruled their respective age group competitions in the 2017 Northern Marianas Athletics All Schools Cross Country Finals held last Saturday at the Saipan Country Club.

Han topped the boys U11 di-

See MCS on Page 26

JON PEREZ
Eucon International School's Andrei Chavez slows down as she crosses the finish line en route to winning the girls U11 division of last Saturday's 2017 NMA All Schools Cross Country Finals held at the Saipan Country Club.